



An Appraisal of the Conservation Areas in Helensburgh 2008



HELENSBURGH
CONSERVATION
AREAS GROUP



Here

*Here our Victorian ghosts are captured
in their legacies of stone, the grace
and glamour of their dwelling places,
from a time when affluence was no sin.*

*Here wood is lifted from mundane plank
and turned to filigree, to stairflight,
warm and resonant, or a burnished cherub
may bare polished buttocks on a newel-post.*

*Here the mere stacking of stone, palewash,
staggered russet bricks and stained glass
that sieves sunshine into bright rugs of light,
all become style far beyond function.*

*Here perhaps the breaths of genteel words
echo in rooms we now cherish and, in attics
stolen from long-lost maids, small sighs escape
for pleasure at our newfangled reverence.*

Catriona Malan 2006

Foreword

The Conservation Areas of Argyll and Bute are very special places. They give us firm connections with our past. They represent huge shifts in culture, ranging as they do from clachans and industrial villages to fine harbours and seaside resorts.

In particular, Argyll is renowned for its planned towns. Inveraray is one of the earliest, with the other white-painted towns and villages of Islay coming soon afterwards. Most of the larger places such as Campbeltown, Lochgilphead and Tobermory were set out on a rigid street plan. Helensburgh, which was founded in 1776 and named after Lady Helen Sutherland, is perhaps the most rigid of them all, with a grid-iron pattern of streets covering almost a square mile.

Although our Conservation Areas are gems that we want to keep safe they are also 21st century places where we live and work. It is essential that they do not become merely visitor destinations and romantic subjects for calendar pictures. It is not only their appearance that we must safeguard but also their character. So, every effort must be made to encourage our historic towns, seaside resorts and fishing harbours to retain their commercial viability, protecting the tranquillity of our leafy residential areas.

Argyll and Bute Council is committed to preserving and enhancing the Conservation Areas in its care. It is the duty of every local authority to review its Conservation Areas from time to time. It is also best practice to have an appraisal document in place that provides a sound understanding of a designated area's special historic and architectural character and appearance. We are working on a series of new Conservation Area Appraisals that will provide a firm basis for decision-making and help us plan for the future of our historic places, as well as set the scene for active Conservation Area management.

The unique feature of the way we are developing the new Conservation Area Appraisals is that local communities take a central role in producing the appraisal document. I am delighted that Helensburgh Community Council and other Helensburgh groups have responded to the challenge of creating this, the first of the new appraisals. It is a piece of work of extremely high quality.

My sincere thanks go to Helensburgh Community Council and in particular to Kathleen Siddle for bringing so many talents together in the Helensburgh Conservation Areas Group, to the Group for persevering to bring this exemplary work to fruition and to the people of Helensburgh for contributing to the document and actively getting involved in its production. This is Helensburgh's own Conservation Area Appraisal and it is also Argyll and Bute Council's adopted supplementary planning guidance. I am sure that it will prove to be invaluable to the local authority and an inspiration to other communities, both in Argyll and Bute and elsewhere.

***Robert Macintyre, Depute Leader Argyll and Bute Council,
Spokesperson for Economy, Environment and Rural Affairs
May 2008***

Lady Helen Sutherland

Sir James Colquhoun decided to name the town in honour of his wife, Lady Helen Sutherland, initially referring to it as 'My Lady Helen's Burgh'.

The name Helensburgh first appears in the parish registers from 1785 and it was apparently in common usage shortly after Lady Helen's death in 1791.



Portrait appearing in a book dated 1869
(artist unknown)

Argyll and Bute Library Service

Acknowledgements

Warmest thanks go to everyone who helped make this Appraisal of the Helensburgh Conservation Areas a reality. Firstly, we are hugely indebted to the core Helensburgh Conservation Areas Group (HCAG) who did the necessary and enormous amount of research and subsequent writing; Alison Graham and Maggie Sheen from the Helensburgh Study Group, Sandy Kerr from the Helensburgh Heritage Trust and the Tree Conservation Trust and David Sinclair from the Helensburgh Community Council.

HCAG understands that this may be the first time a community group has been charged by a local authority to produce an Appraisal of a Conservation Area. Sincere thanks are due to Jenny Carlile, the Conservation and Design Officer for Argyll and Bute Council, who initiated the setting up of this unique community project and kindly, and most tactfully, supported our endeavours.

Thanks also to Pat McCann and Michael Davis of the Helensburgh Public Library: Pat for his help with the library display and Michael for his understanding and caring assistance each time a HCAG member needed it.

In helping to illustrate this document, HCAG has been blessed with the enthusiastic and able assistance of other Helensburgh groups, particularly:

- Helensburgh Photographic Club, most especially Jim Shimmins, HPC Secretary, who has given of his time and expertise so positively and courteously
- Helensburgh and District Art Club
- Helensburgh Writers Group
- Lomond Primary School.

Very many thanks go to all of them for their most valuable contributions which helped to bring our Conservation Appraisal document to life.

Lastly, our very grateful thanks go to all the many people who made helpful comments on the Draft Document, enabling us to create this final Appraisal.

Kathleen Siddle
Chair HCAG
and
Secretary, Helensburgh Community Council

Helensburgh's two Conservation Areas



The first Conservation Area which was designated in 1971 surrounds The Hill House. The second Conservation Area, designated in 1994, covers an extensive part of the town's residential area but excluded the town centre. Both have been awarded "outstanding status" by Historic Scotland.

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Helensburgh in its setting



Views South over the Clyde Estuary



Helensburgh from the waterfront



View out to the hills

Top left & bottom left Jenny Carlile. Others: Jim Shimmins

Introduction

1.1 Location and Function of Helensburgh and its Conservation Areas

Helensburgh lies some 25 miles to the north west of Glasgow. The town's situation, south facing over the Clyde estuary on gently sloping ground and sheltered by the surrounding hills, is extraordinarily benign. Contrary to original intentions, Helensburgh never became a manufacturing town so it was saved from the problems of post-industrial decay experienced elsewhere on the Clyde. It was, and still is, both a place to visit and a beautiful place in which to live.

The main historic route into Helensburgh was the Dumbarton to Portincapple coaching route which runs along the shore and in the town centre becomes East and West Clyde Streets. The commuter railway line from Glasgow to Helensburgh also follows the shore-line and terminates in the town centre at Helensburgh Central Station.

The two Conservation Areas are parts of a residential suburb reached by various roads running from south to north up the hill from the town centre. Sinclair Street is the principal of these north-south streets forming the "spine" of the town and linking Helensburgh with the A82 trunk road. Coming into town from this direction the motorist drives directly down from the open countryside, into the grid of walled and hedge-lined streets that form the basic structure for the two Conservation Areas.

The main axis of Helensburgh's historic residential developments is Colquhoun Street, one block to the west of Sinclair Street. This runs from Colquhoun Square at the retailing heart of the town centre up to the Hill House in the north, but is bisected by the West Highland Railway. This line meanders through the Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area, with a station on Sinclair Street. To the east of Sinclair Street, and separated from it by Hermitage Park and the Victoria Halls, is the gently curving Charlotte Street.

Adjoining the town centre, the Conservation Areas are traditionally where any suburb of a town centre would be located. The difference is in their functional relationship. The wealth of the original residents living in what are now the Conservation Areas was created and acquired elsewhere, traditionally in Glasgow and in trading across the Empire. What are now the Conservation Areas served primarily as a suburb of Glasgow, not Helensburgh. Historically, the Town Centre has been a service centre both to the residents working outwith the town and visitors to the town.

The development of properties within the Conservation Areas is therefore a signature of the fortunes painted on a much wider global context. This has given Helensburgh an underlying cosmopolitan thread to its culture. Helensburgh thus became a precious place.

1.2 Designation and Planning Context

The first Conservation Area to be declared in Helensburgh was that surrounding The Hill House in 1971. A second, much larger area was declared in 1994. Both Areas have been accorded "outstanding" status by Historic Scotland. This Appraisal deals with both areas.

Certain activities that would normally come under planning control are given exemption under Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (Scottish Executive 1992b). Article 4 of that Order enables local authorities to request the Scottish Government to make a direction that certain categories of exemption will not apply within a specified area. Frequently, such application is made in respect of Conservation Areas. An Article 4 Direction Order is in place within The Hill House Conservation Area.

Apart from the two Conservation Area designations, other important, legal considerations in the management of the areas include Listed Buildings and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). A list of the former is at **Appendix A**. Details can be found in the Register held in the local Public Library, on Historic Scotland's website.

Whilst all trees in a Conservation Area are protected as if they were under a TPO, some parts of the Conservation Areas are individually protected by TPOs. A full list of the TPOs is given at **Appendix B**.

The main elements of the Scottish planning context and of the local planning context are set out in **Appendix C**.

At the local level, planning policies are in a period of transition as, although the Structure Plan is approved, the Modified Finalised Draft Local Plan for Argyll and Bute is awaiting final adoption in the early part of 2009.

1.3 Purpose of the Appraisal

Planning Advice Note 71 Conservation Area Management (Scottish Executive 2004) states on page 5 that Conservation Area appraisals *“analyse what makes a place special and assists management in: defining and reviewing boundaries; developing opportunities and priorities for enhancement; assisting policy formulation; ensuring consistent decision making and supporting funding bids. An Appraisal is a management tool to enable the active management of Conservation Areas.”*

The purpose of an Appraisal of a Conservation Area is to set out a more detailed explanation of the special interest and changing needs of the area. It is intended to be *“the basis for the development of a programme of action that is compatible with the sensitivities of the historic area and enables local authorities to fulfil their statutory duties to protect and enhance Conservation Areas”*. Under the proposed new planning framework, all such

documents will be supplementary planning guidance and regarded as a “material consideration” in reaching decisions.

Conservation Area Management Plans are the next step after the appraisal. They provide guidance through policy statements to assist in the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Area. This is a direct response to the Planning Act which places a duty on local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its Conservation Areas. The Conservation Area Management Plan, taken forward by the Council as planning authority, will shape the long-term management strategy for Helensburgh's historic built environment, bringing together the various services of Argyll and Bute Council in a corporate consensus, working together with other agencies operating in the town, the local community and other stakeholders.

1.4 The Appraisal Process

As noted above under Acknowledgements, this may be the first time that a community group has been charged with producing an Appraisal of a Conservation Area. It is therefore ground-breaking in the way it links the professionals and experts of Argyll and Bute Council so closely with the Helensburgh community.

The Appraisal process started back in late 2005 when Jenny Carlile, Argyll and Bute Council's energetic Conservation and Design Officer came to a meeting of the Helensburgh Community Council (HCC) to talk to the members about the very special quality of the two Helensburgh Conservation Areas. Subsequently, Jenny invited HCC to liaise with other groups in the wider Helensburgh community with the purpose of undertaking an appraisal of the Areas. This action stems directly from the justification for policy LP ENV 14 of the draft local plan for Argyll and Bute. **(See Appendix C)**

HCAG then mounted a public exhibition in the Victoria Halls of impressions of the Conservation Areas seen through the eyes of Helensburgh's photographers, artists, writers and school pupils.

This exhibition was organised to coincide with the publication of the draft Appraisal document. As well as being part of the exhibition, 150 copies of this Draft Appraisal were circulated widely within Helensburgh, including to representatives of the groups mentioned above and further afield to Argyll and Bute Council Officials, stakeholders and interested partners like the planners and developers, the utility and transport companies, Historic Scotland, the Scottish Tourist Association and the National Trust for Scotland among others. Background working papers were also made available.

Feedback from this whole exercise was obtained by post-it responses at the exhibition, and from questionnaires seeking both quantitative and qualitative information.

In addition, talks were given to the Helensburgh Photographic Club, The Helensburgh and District Art Club and the Helensburgh Writers Group, explaining the work of HCAG and inviting them to help illustrate the Appraisal document by contributing their interpretation of what the Conservation Areas mean to them. Lomond School, Hermitage Primary School and Hermitage Academy were also contacted and overall the response from each of these clubs, groups and schools has been tremendous.

This part of the project involved discussing the work of HCAG with householders in the Conservation Areas and asking permission for their houses to be photographed or painted. Again, the response was wonderfully positive and through this process, the profile of the Conservation Areas, HCAG and the Appraisal continued to be raised in Helensburgh.



Some of the members of the Helensburgh Conservation Areas Group at work.

Kathleen Siddle (2006)

The comments of all these groups, professionals and interested individuals have been an invaluable source of information which has fed this Appraisal document. An analysis of the responses is presented in **Appendix D**.

We are fortunate in Helensburgh in having a large number of active voluntary organisations and groups. Representatives of several of these agreed to join the newly created Helensburgh Conservation Areas Group (HCAG) and have proved very enthusiastic and helpful members. They have included representatives from the Helensburgh Community Council, the Helensburgh Study Group, the Helensburgh Heritage Trust, the Helensburgh Tree Conservation Trust and the Helensburgh Civic Society.

The Helensburgh Community Council and HCAG members believe that Public Consultation is a vital ingredient to the success of this project. Several mechanisms were put in train as work progressed to create awareness and encourage involvement.

These included:

- letters in local newspapers
- photographic display in the local public library
- progress reports to local organisations
- school visits and talks
- contributions from creative clubs (arts, photographers and writers)
- residents in the Conservation Areas were contacted for permission to photograph significant architecture and settings
- advice sought from professionals with relevant expertise.

In most cases, an invitation was given to readers to contact the Group for further details of the work of HCAG.

HCAG has also given encouragement to community groups in Campbeltown and in Cove and Kilcreggan. We send our best wishes to both these groups and to communities in other areas who wish to produce their own Conservation Appraisal document.



Exhibition in the Victoria Halls
Jenny Carlile

Four Images of The Hill House

Contributed as part of local community
involvement in the Conservation Area
Appraisal process



Sofia Perina-Miller



James Spence



Carrie Morrison, aged 11, Lomond School



Neil Macleod

Exuberant Architectural Detail



Jim Shimmins (2006)

Special architectural and historic interest

- What makes Helensburgh special

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explains why Helensburgh and its Conservation Areas are of importance both historically and architecturally. It shows why they have been awarded “outstanding” status by Historic Scotland.

The Conservation Areas also need to be understood within the wider context of the town. What has evolved is complex. So, later sections in this chapter explore what gives the Conservation Areas such a distinctive and unique character.

In addition to the guidance available from Historic Scotland, we have consulted work on the evaluation of heritage features by two state bodies in Australia - New South Wales Heritage Office 2001 and Government of Victoria Online.

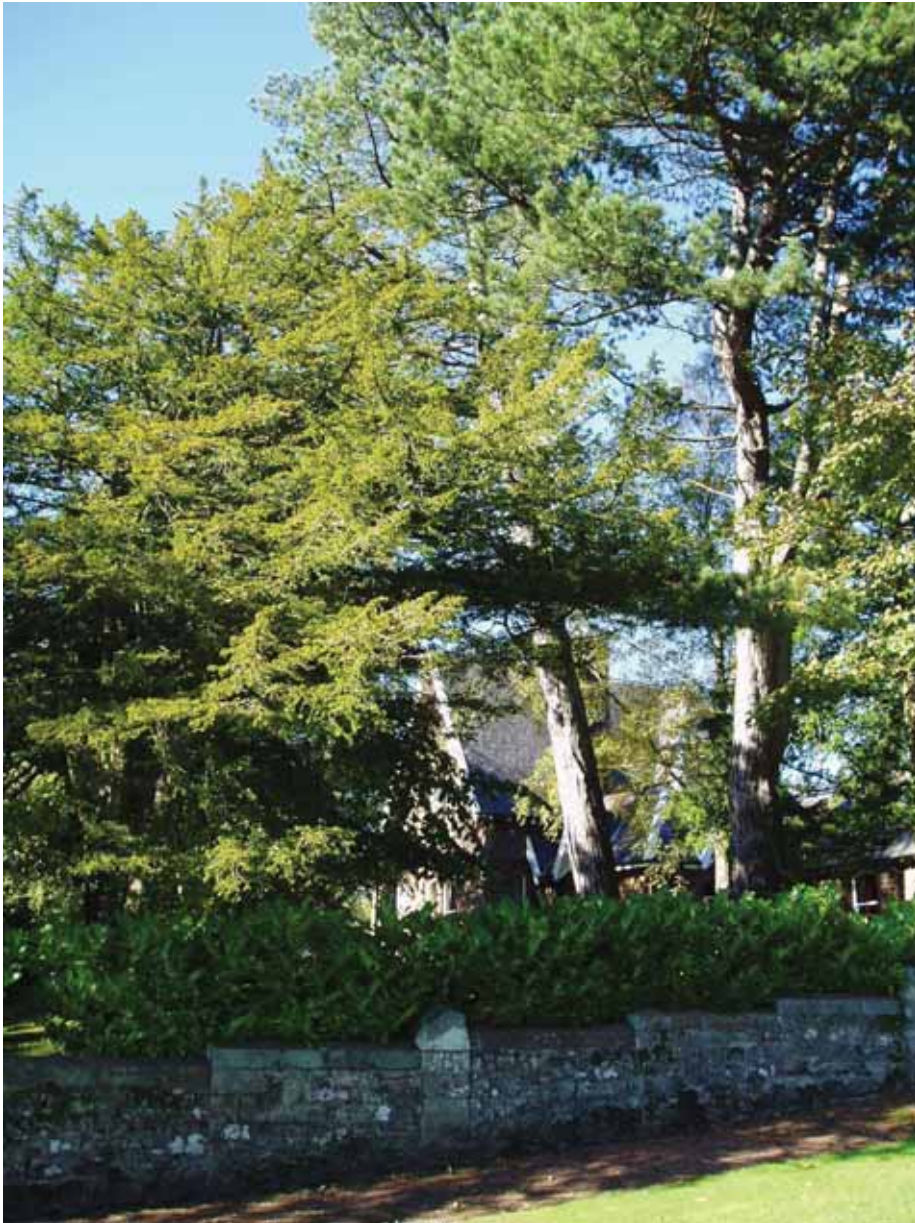
2.2 A place of paradox: an identity forged by chance

In Helensburgh there is a conjunction of apparent opposites (physically, socially and economically) that has produced a place of incomparable character that is not easily categorised.

The following features of Helensburgh need to be borne in mind as being the context within which the Conservation Areas sit:

- The community in Helensburgh is an independent-minded one. While the town of 15,000 people is within the governance of mainly rural Argyll and Bute it is also on the periphery of Greater Glasgow.

- While the Conservation Areas may seem to form a suburb of Helensburgh town centre, historically they developed as dormitory areas for Greater Glasgow.
- Although conceived as a place of manufacture for dispossessed farming communities on the Luss estate, Helensburgh became, ironically, a haven for the rich merchant and professional classes escaping the disease and foul air of the merchant city of Glasgow at the height of its prosperity.
- Laid out in the austere age of the Enlightenment, the built environment emerged later at the tipping point to the start of the Romantic period when fashion permitted wealthy Victorians and Edwardians to indulge their architectural fancies.
- Unusually, the suburb sustained the town centre, with upper Helensburgh residents providing the wealth gained in the city and across the Empire to sustain the artisans and the shopkeepers of lower Helensburgh. It became a socially divided town.
- Known as the “Garden City of the Clyde” in the 1930s, Helensburgh predates the Garden City movement by half a century. (Sheen, M R 2007)
- In the 20th century, more densely built housing areas were developed on the edges of the town. This has resulted in the Conservation Areas becoming more central, but still with clear views to hills and water and has created a striking disparity between the arcadian character of the Conservation Areas and the more dense form of the newer housing areas.



The arcadian character of Upper Helensburgh

Jenny Carlile (2006)

2.3 Special historic interest

The development of Upper Helensburgh spans the period from the beginning of the 19th century to the early 20th century. The Conservation Areas reflect the changing styles and fashions of house and garden design over this period. They portray a past way of life, one that was experienced by the new, extremely wealthy middle class arising from the burgeoning world-wide trade that was centred on nearby Glasgow.

Helensburgh's earliest road pattern was set out on a grid, with feus allocated as rectangular (usually quarter-acre) plots. By the time much building had commenced changing fashion had led to an extraordinary conjunction of architectural styles, all set within this rigid grid. The urban-rural duality created by the large urban villas in extensive estate-like gardens creates much interest.

Helensburgh is also significant in the context of the history of urban planning. Unlike other settlements, the wide-open streets and generous plots for large gardens offered a 'breathing space' not known in modern towns (Battrum, 1865). By 1865, Helensburgh was two thirds developed – well before the Garden City movement took off in the early twentieth century.

The number of important people connected with Helensburgh, include technological inventors, famous artists, architects, poets and industry leaders and merchants. Helensburgh has been an important place of innovation, culture and the arts.

Notable people associated with Helensburgh and district include:

Inventors
Scientists

Henry Bell and John Logie Baird
Lord Kelvin (William Thomson)
Sir William Ramsay, Sir Joseph & Sir William Hooker and Sir James Frazer
A.J. Cronin, Neil Munro & WH Auden
Jack Buchanan & Jimmy Logan
Charles Rennie Mackintosh
A.N. Paterson, Burnet & Leiper

Writers & Poets
Actors & Entertainers
Architects & Artists

In particular, the work of the Glasgow Boys and Girls - especially Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret MacDonal Mackintosh - has put upper Helensburgh on the world scene as a place of great artistic and stylistic achievement that influenced generations of 20th century artists and designers.

2.4 Special Architectural Interest

“Upper Helensburgh has a unique collection of turn-of-the-century villas, including one of the great houses of 20th century architecture” (Walker, F. 2000).

The Helensburgh Conservation Areas are interesting architecturally because they demonstrate the evolution of domestic architecture for the increasingly wealthy middle class during the middle and latter half of the 19th century and early 20th century.

The lower slopes of Helensburgh were developed first, with successive streets added to the grid pattern, or occasionally sweeping off into a more fashionable crescent or a wide sweep to accommodate the coming railway, up the side of the estuary as time progressed. This pattern of development has resulted in a progression of architectural styles - from early Victorian to Edwardian - moving up the hill.

Unlike the earlier, more strictly planned towns such as Inveraray or Port Charlotte (Islay), there is an eclectic mix of styles here. Architectural references range from the Greek, Italian, French and Gothic to the Scottish Baronial and the English “half-timbered” or “Shavian” look.

Battrum notes in 1865 that even the earlier villas of the “cottage order” offer “every variety of design and size of construction, though of late years taste has run more in erection of mansions of a large and handsome appearance”. While the former would have been holiday homes for the most part, these latter would have been more permanent residences made possible by the new railway connection to Glasgow.



Top: The Hill House by Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1902)
Middle: Longcroft by A.N. Paterson (1901)
Lower: House by William Leiper (1871)

Jim Shimmins (2006)

The extraordinary mixture of styles continued during the whole period including decorative Edwardian additions to Victorian Houses of an earlier and plainer design. Libraries and billiard rooms were fashionable additions of this later period.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Baillie Scott, two significant architects of world-wide standing designed houses within the Conservation Areas. A.N. Paterson and William Leiper, local architects with national reputations built and extended numerous houses here.

(For a more detailed analysis of buildings and their architects, grouped according to the main development phases see Chapter 4 Development of the townscape and built environment, in particular sections 4.3 - 4.5, page 26)

2.5 The Distinctive Character

A significant part of the character of the Conservation Areas lies in the spatial arrangement, and in the extraordinary contrast and variety, which is harmonised within a unifying framework of repeating patterns in the streetscape. It is in the coming together and in the resolution of opposing characteristics rather than in some singular or outstanding element that character and 'sense of place' have been forged.

The overarching pattern: Informal elements within a formal structure

The most striking aspects of Helensburgh are the grid pattern of its layout, the south-facing residences set in spacious grounds and the broad tree-lined streets running north-south and east-west. This formality of structure – the linearity of the street plan and the imposing design of the later mansions is tempered by many organic elements.

Far from being anonymous, each street has its own character, and each block its own unique conjunction of distinctive residences set

in large grounds. There is thus a repeating pattern that never (in the detail) exactly replicates itself and offers constant variety. In travelling from one point to another, the route need never be the same.

With only minimal restrictions at the time of building, both architecture and streetscape have made for individual exuberance that is, nevertheless, constrained by the overarching grid structure. The grid itself therefore has acquired the imperfections of those things organic which lend both character, identity, and appeal.

The tranquillity of much of the two Conservation Areas is an essential part of their character and enables enjoyment of the attractive and varied streetscapes by all who choose to wander round.

Streetscape: The Urban – Country Park

The grid pattern and regimented street tree planting are very urban in character. Yet where one might anticipate a monument, grand building or statue, the vistas looking both east and west lead surprisingly to the hills framed by avenues of trees and foliage and the grass verges, which give a romantic, country park feel.

Cherry trees predominate in the streets, providing a festive appearance in the spring that is praised by Japanese visitors and bright leaf colour in the darker days of autumn.

Repeating patterns that unify and lend a sense of harmony and character are the low sandstone walls and hedges (often privet mixed with wild species like hawthorn) on the northern boundaries of East-West streets offering glimpses into leafy drives

up to mansions. In contrast the high stone-walls of the southern boundary of East-West streets when viewed from the road, often have a distinctly urban mews character with their outbuildings and tradesmen's entrances.

The species planted and the designs created for gardens are not necessarily spectacular (other than the garden at the Hill House which has recently been reinstated to its original design) but for the most part they generally reflect 19th and 20th century fashion.

The Feus: Urban Mansion – Country Park Estate

While the style of the houses varies from plain Victorian to decorative Edwardian, most are essentially quite suburban (apart from the earlier cottage-style residences), yet the contrasting spaciousness of the setting is evocative of a country estate.

The placing of the villa or mansion within its rectangular plot generally seeks to create a country house atmosphere, with long and winding tree-lined driveways leading to imposing entrance porches.

Garden fronts and lawns look south, offering sea views framed by trees and shrubs. Coach houses, gardeners' cottages, laundries and other subsidiary buildings are tucked away round the back of the plot. This results in a distinctive character to the streets that run east-west.

On the north side of these streets, mature trees and shrubs offer only occasional glimpses of buildings that are guarded by imposing gates and gate piers, while on the south side of these streets there are the high stone walls of ancillary domestic offices and kitchen gardens.

A place of distinctive character and architectural interest

Decorative Edwardian additions to a plainer Victorian House



A long, curving drive through Gardens planted for pleasure

Queen Street, looking west, with leafy driveways leading up to south-facing mansions on one side but with a harder, more urban character on the other.



Top: David Sinclair 2007. Others: David Sheen 2006

Some mansions placed on the corners of the grid arrangement take advantage of the extra length of drive made possible by a main gate set in the side (north-south) street.

Helensburgh's uniqueness and its vulnerability

Helensburgh has acquired a distinctive character and style of its own. Although the grid within which the houses are placed is rigid, the style of the houses themselves was never planned. Nevertheless, what has emerged, the patterns within patterns, embodies a design logic that has proved relatively robust. The area remains remarkably intact.

There are now many pressures, both social and economic, acting upon the area. Mansions have been divided into apartments and new houses built in extensive gardens. Unlike some historic built environments there is 'space' enabling the area to absorb, at least to some extent, the expanding needs of a modern age. How far adaptation to modern living can be accommodated without destroying the historic features and distinctive character is fundamental to the preservation of its distinctive and very special character and appearance.

This Appraisal will serve to inform decision making in the future. Furthermore, the Management Plan, to be prepared by the Council, will bring together everyone involved in managing, maintaining and changing the character and appearance of the Conservation Areas and help us to preserve - and enhance - this very special place.

2.6 Design features and aesthetics

The Conservation Areas are noted for their aesthetic appeal. Indeed it is the landscape architecture (the geometric structure of the grid contrasted with the freedom of the infill) rather than any individual villa that gives rise to the aesthetic appeal and to the essence of place. In assessing these, we have been influenced by the work of Christopher Alexander (Alexander, C. 1979).

The notable degree of unity in the landscape architecture of the Helensburgh Conservation Areas comes from the dominance of some features, balance in others and in repetitions of contrasting elements.

Unity in the Conservation Areas comes from the:

- tight, but not immutable grid structure
- repetition of the tree-lined streetscape
- positioning of houses to the north side of properties and facing south
- use of sandstone (grey and red) and slated roofs
- high stone walls on the northern boundary of properties
- hedges and low stone walls along other boundaries

Contrast arises from the:

- garden settings of urban villas
- eclectic style of villas and mansions
- later additions in contrasting architectural styles
- later make-overs introducing new materials
- influences of the Arts and Crafts movement
- urban/rural contrast on E-W streets, the country park feel looking north and the urban aspect looking south.

Dominance comes from:

- linearity
- vertical line of the built environment, including building height and fenestration.

Balance is achieved by:

- proportions and scale of buildings
- the ratio of house to large garden

Urban / rural duality of East-West Streets

[Note the urban nature on the south side of the street and the rural character of the north]



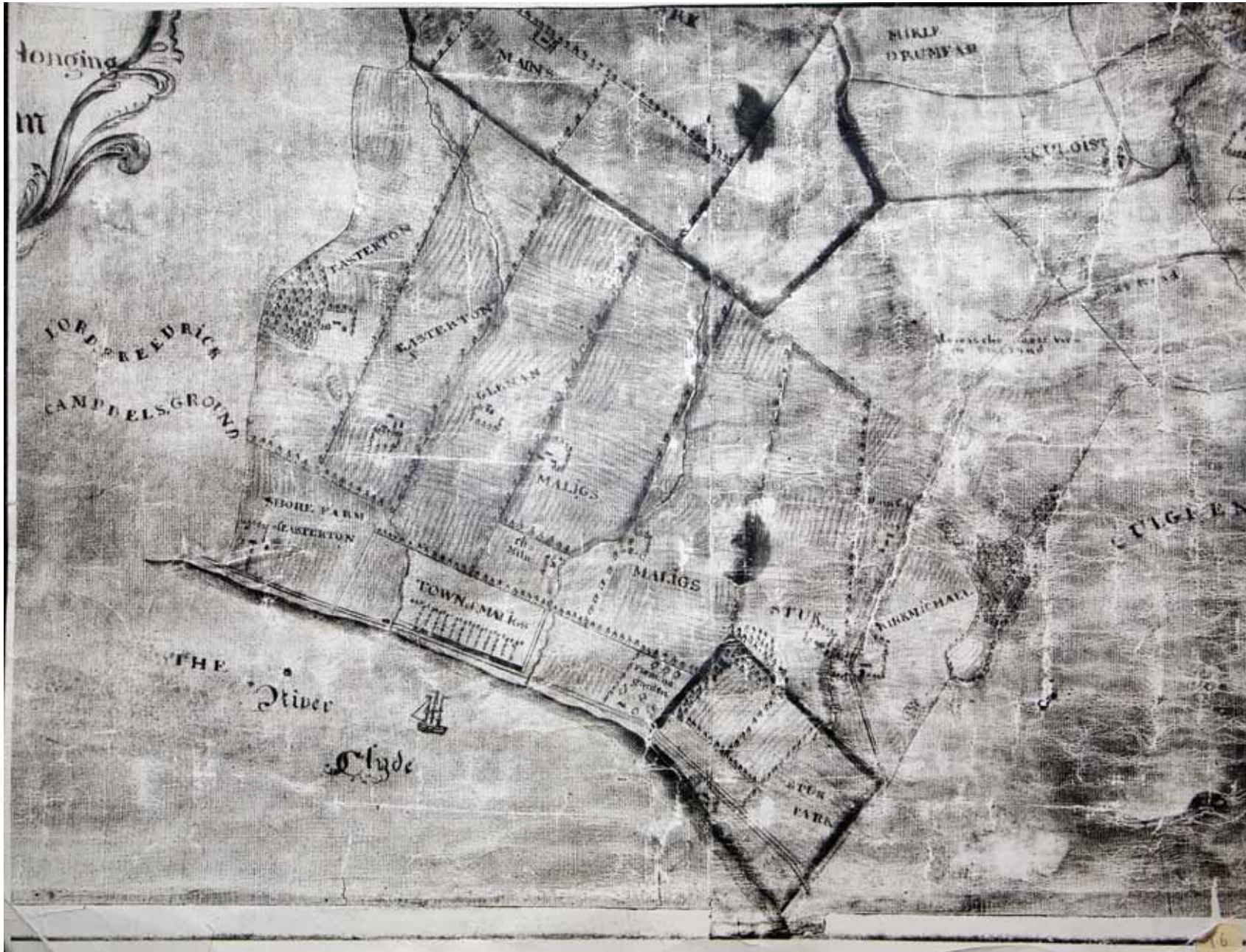
Looking East



Looking West

David Sheen (2006)

The 'Town of Maligs' from a survey of Luss Estates by Charles Ross of Greenlaw,



Map held in Helensburgh Public Library

Helensburgh's historic development 1776-1915

3.1 Introduction

Helensburgh's outstanding historic townscape was developed as a planned new burgh on a superb site on the north shore of the Clyde estuary. It evolved through successive phases of planning and development from the start of the last quarter of the 18th century, throughout the whole of the 19th century up until the outbreak of the First World War. Despite the serious economic problems that subsequently arose in Glasgow and around the Clyde Estuary, some further development of a similar, but more restrained character, continued in the inter-war period and two notable houses, "Ballytrim" and Green Park (both now listed) were built in the 20th century.

The two designated Conservation Areas cover only the suburban part of town that developed from around 1840 onwards. In order to fully understand the development of these Conservation Areas it is important to consider the historical development of the town as a whole. Furthermore, the review of the Conservation Areas will require an appreciation of the historic context in which they sit and we need to assess whether current designations are sufficient for the protection of Helensburgh's built heritage and streetscape. Hence, this section and the working paper on which it is based cover the historic development of the burgh as a whole from 1776 onward.

3.2 Origins of the burgh 1776-1802

The development of the burgh was initiated around 1776 by Sir James Colquhoun (26th Baronet of Luss and 1st of GB) and continued by his direct descendents. The land, sited on the north shore of the Clyde estuary, had previously been owned by the Clan MacAulay of Ardencaple Castle to the west (now demolished), whose family roots and ownership of land are documented in historical records going back to the 13th century.

They had sold it in 1705 to Sir John Schaw of Greenock, whose daughter in turn sold it to Sir James Colquhoun in 1752.

Feus for building purposes were first advertised in 1776 and a particular aim was to encourage cottage industries, primarily different forms of textile manufacture. It is thought this was intended to provide employment for crofters displaced by the introduction of sheep farming, known to have been in progress on the Colquhoun estates from at least 1769. The income from the feus granted would also contribute to the annual income of the estate. The introduction of sheep and the establishment of new towns and villages were typical actions undertaken by estate owners of the era in order to promote economic improvement.

In the event, early development was slow, with apparently only 17 houses on plots feued by 1794. The attempts to introduce textile production failed in contrast to the growth of textile industries elsewhere in the Clyde area. The main occupations in practice are thought to have been subsistence farming, fishing and related activities such as milling, malting, blacksmithing, cooperage (for herring barrels) and distilling. Nevertheless, the intent to continue with planned development remained.

Sir James Colquhoun decided to name the town in honour of his wife, Lady Helen Sutherland, initially referring to it as 'My Lady Helen's Burgh'. The name Helensburgh first appears in the parish registers from 1785 and it was apparently in common usage shortly after Lady Helen's death in 1791.

The 1791-1799 Statistical Account of Scotland (Sinclair, Sir J. 1799. ed.) records for the Parish of Row, presumably referring to Helensburgh, that there is "...one village in the parish, lately built, which contains about one hundred souls". This was sufficient to justify a petition by Sir James for the Burgh Charter, granted by King George III in 1802.

3.3 Drivers of development and growth

The development of the Burgh occurred in successive phases through a combination of formal planning, controls and chance.

The main drivers of demand for villas and other accommodation in Helensburgh were the fashion for sea water cures in the early 19th century and the demand for summer residences in an attractive, healthy environment away from Glasgow.

The successive phases of economic development of Glasgow and the Clyde Estuary throughout the 19th century, the consequent growth of the business and professional classes, and the developments in transport made Helensburgh increasingly accessible from further afield:

- 1809 Coaching services had commenced by this date and substantial coaching inns were built to provide accommodation to travellers.
- 1812 PS *Comet*, the first commercial steamship in Europe, started service between Glasgow and Port Glasgow; shortly afterwards to Helensburgh also. The *Comet* was designed and commissioned by Henry Bell, innovator, proprietor of the Baths Inn and first provost of Helensburgh.
- 1816 Pier of basic construction put up on the site of the present pier.
- 1834 Grant of ground for the improvement of the pier.
- 1841 Glasgow – Greenock railway opened leading to rail/ steamer services to Helensburgh

- 1858 Glasgow – Helensburgh railway line opened.
- 1882 Craigendoran steamer terminal opened.
- 1894 West Highland Railway opened.

The main population growth (referring to permanent residents as opposed to the large number of summer residents and visitors) spanned 50 years from 1831-1881. During this period, the population rose from 1,170 to 7,893 permanent residents. The start of the fastest period of growth coincided with the building and opening of the Glasgow-Helensburgh railway in the 1850s. The expansion then began to tail off, with a population of 8,529 recorded in the census of 1911.

3.4 The main phases of residential development 1803 - 1839

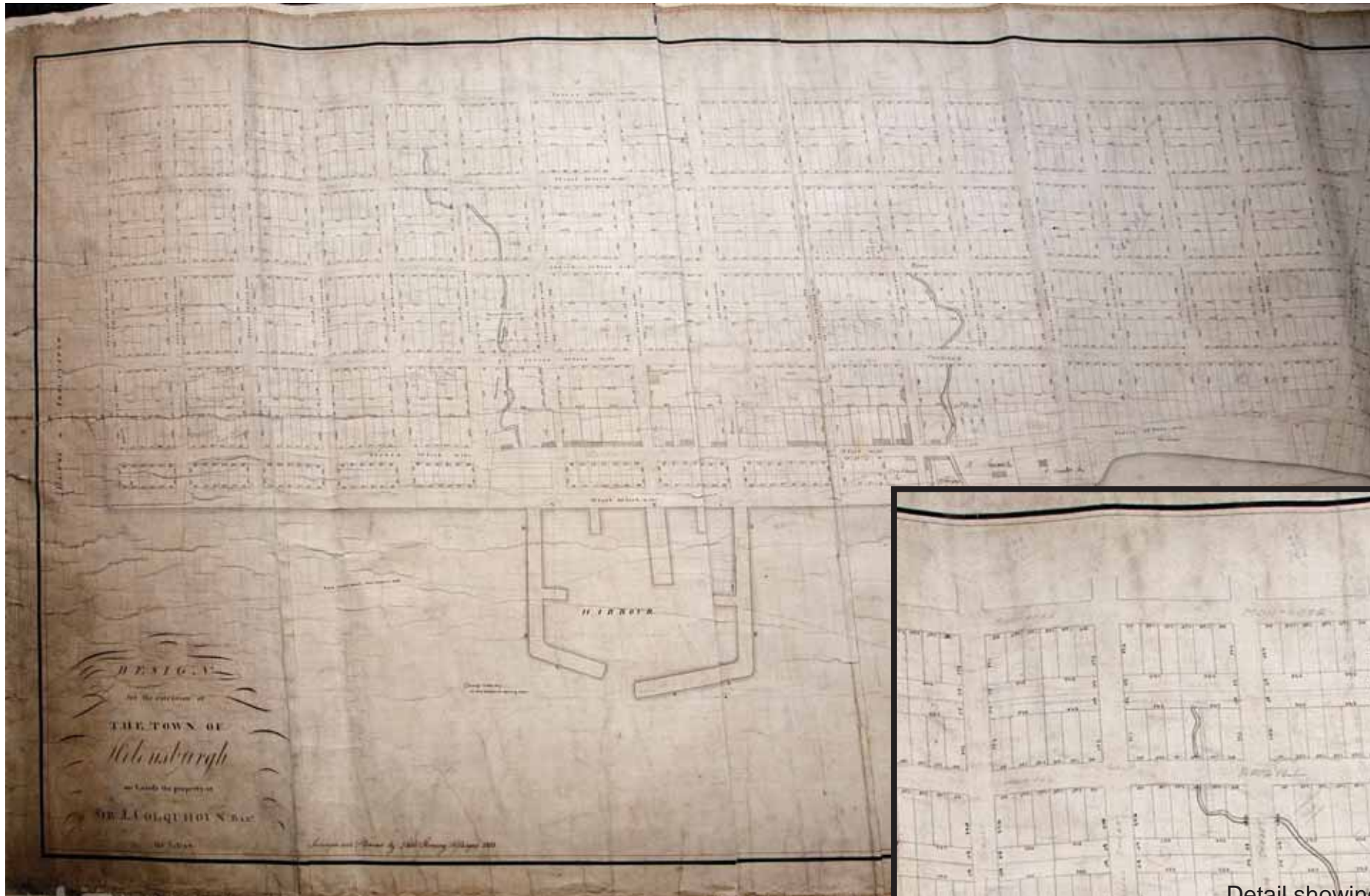
The 1803 *Design for the Extension of the Town of Helensburgh*, (Fleming, P. 1803) surveyed and planned by Peter Fleming, a young Glasgow surveyor (born 1783 and emigrated to Canada in the 1820s), shows a substantial scheme for the development of a planned town and also existing properties on the shore road (Clyde Street). This Helensburgh scheme predates Fleming's map and planning scheme for Glasgow City Council, commissioned in 1806, published in 1807.

The smaller properties with close packed buildings are shown close to the current town centre; the four larger properties with detached buildings are further out, round the East Bay.

Although the area proposed for development was an attractive estuary site, access was not particularly good, even by the standards of the time, Glasgow was at least six hours distant by

Design for the extension of Helensburgh by Peter Fleming – 1803

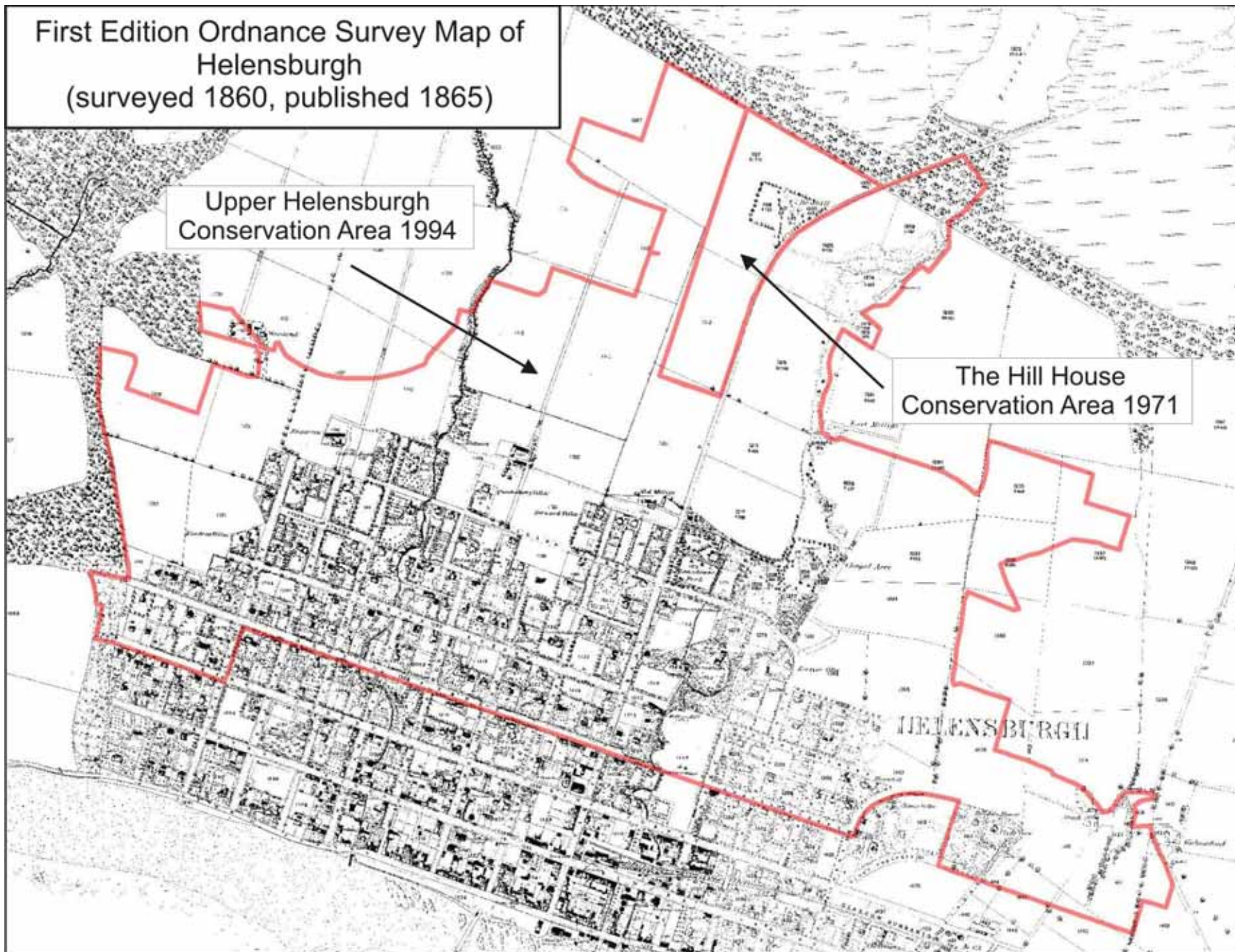
Map held in Helensburgh Public Library



First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of
Helensburgh
(surveyed 1860, published 1865)

Upper Helensburgh
Conservation Area 1994

The Hill House
Conservation Area 1971



horse drawn transport and sea access was by sailing boat in a tidal estuary with a shallow shoreline.

The area of ground planned out measured approximately 1.4 miles (2.25 km) along the shoreline and extended nearly one third of a mile inland (0.5 km). The area covered by the plan, with reference to existing streets, is:

West	One block beyond Sutherland St.
North	Montrose St
East	Six blocks East of Adelaide St, at which there was a change of angle of the crossways streets related to the curving shoreline

On the west side, the plan extends considerably beyond the 1802 burgh boundary which followed the line of Glennan Burn.

The planning principles applied were those of a grid layout with broad streets. The square-ish blocks of the main grid were divided up into feuing lots – 16 per block of about 2 acres. From later maps, it appears that the original block layout was followed quite closely in the early phase of development, but the plots feued were often larger than the basic units, and the shapes frequently do not follow the plot boundaries as drawn.

The street width is shown as a uniform 60 ft between the plot boundaries around the blocks and this was actually followed in the street layout up to, and including, Montrose Street. The 60ft includes any pavements or verges made then or at a later date. Orderly and spacious town plans were common in Scotland in the late 18th and early 19th centuries following James Craig's layout of 1768 for Edinburgh's New Town.

According to a directory of 1834, there were 217 householders in the area of which 126 offered lodgings from 1 to 14 rooms. Publications from 1830 – 1842 refer to a row of whitewashed houses or cottages fronting the beach with villas behind. This is supported by a map in the Atlas of Scotland, Dunbartonshire

(Thompson, J. 1832). The properties were said to have been built solely or chiefly as sea-bathing quarters, the summer homes of Glasgow's merchant class.

1840-1859

This period may be regarded as the first phase of Helensburgh's Victorian villa developments. Development in the first half of this phase preceded the direct rail connection from Glasgow but there was a rail/steamer service via Greenock that took around 1½ hours. The rapid population growth from 1851 to 1861 indicates that the construction and opening of the Glasgow – Helensburgh railway in 1858 had a marked effect on Helensburgh's popularity as a place to live among the business and professional classes.

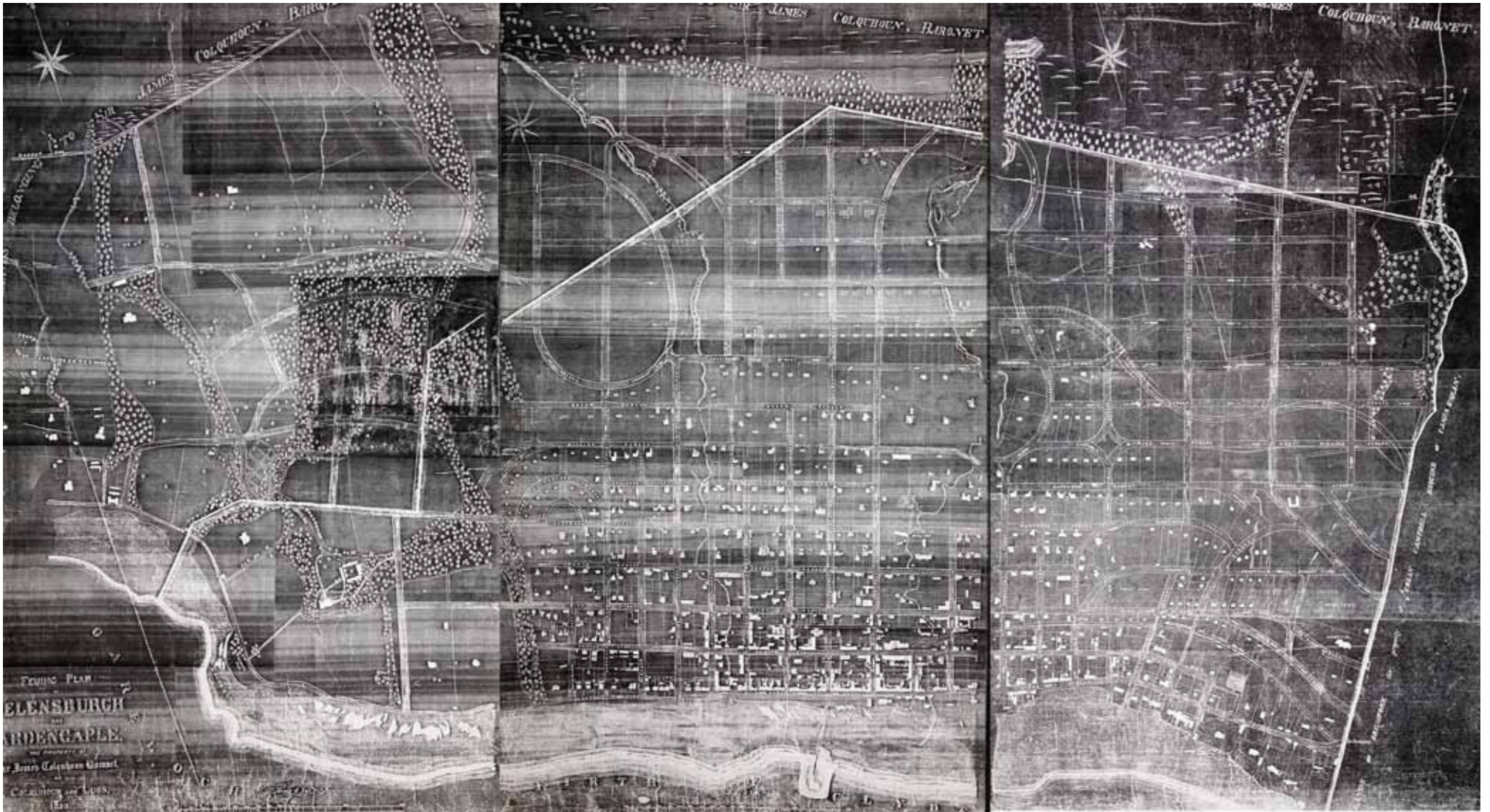
The parts of the grid that were laid out and probably largely populated at this time extended up as far as the original burgh boundary at Millig Street. There were some other properties constructed further out along Sinclair Street / Luss Road. By the time of the first Ordnance Survey map (surveyed 1860, published 1865), villas had already been built on sites between Millig Street and Queen Street.

The following description was published in 1846 (Hawkstone-Hutton and Gorrie, 1846)

“Helensburgh...has rapidly grown into importance as a fashionable watering-place, and a favourite resort of families of distinction during the summer months. The town is regularly built, and consists partly of one principal street, extending along the shore for more than a mile, and intersected at right angles by numerous other well-formed streets. The houses are of handsome appearance, and interspersed with pleasing villas having grounds tastefully laid out; the surrounding scenery, also, is agreeably diversified.... There are two commodious hotels

Map of 1880 (Anon. 1880) held in Helensburgh Library

Showing the curved roads introduced by Spence's proposals of 1857. Even by 1880, some of these remained on paper only, and not all were implemented.



with several inns, and also numerous lodging houses for the accommodation of visitors. On the shore, at the east end of the town, is a spacious and well-arranged building (ie the Baths Inn, now Queen's Court, East Clyde Street), containing hot and cold baths, with every requisite appendage”.

While the lines of the early 19th century grid and similar block sizes were continued up the hill, the street layout and block sizes start to depart from the original pattern in the developments north of Argyle Street. The main features are the dog-leg in John Street, the break in Stafford Street and the five rectangular blocks of about 3½ – 4½ acres in the vicinity of the Glennan Burn and John Street.

The distance between plot boundaries across Stafford, Millig and Upper John Streets is significantly less than the standard 60ft width of the main grid.

The major variation occurred to the east of what is now Sinclair Street where a large area was feued to form the Hermitage Estate and other large blocks to the east of Sinclair Street including Lansdowne Park (demolished about 2004, redevelopment pending) and Chapel Acre (demolished and site redeveloped). The first Ordnance Survey Map of 1860 shows that these blocks contained very few buildings and the ground appears to have been mostly private parkland and woodland.

In 1857 William Spence (1806-1883), an architect practising in the west of Scotland and Ulster, was commissioned to draw up a further proposed feuing plan (Spence, W. 1857). He had previously designed Rhu Parish Church (1847) and had feued sites for 16 houses along West Montrose Street, on one of which he built his own home, Ardlui House (demolished). The Spence design introduced curves and crescents into the Helensburgh street plan, notably Sutherland Crescent to the west and King's Crescent lower down to the east, below the line of a former beach cliff.

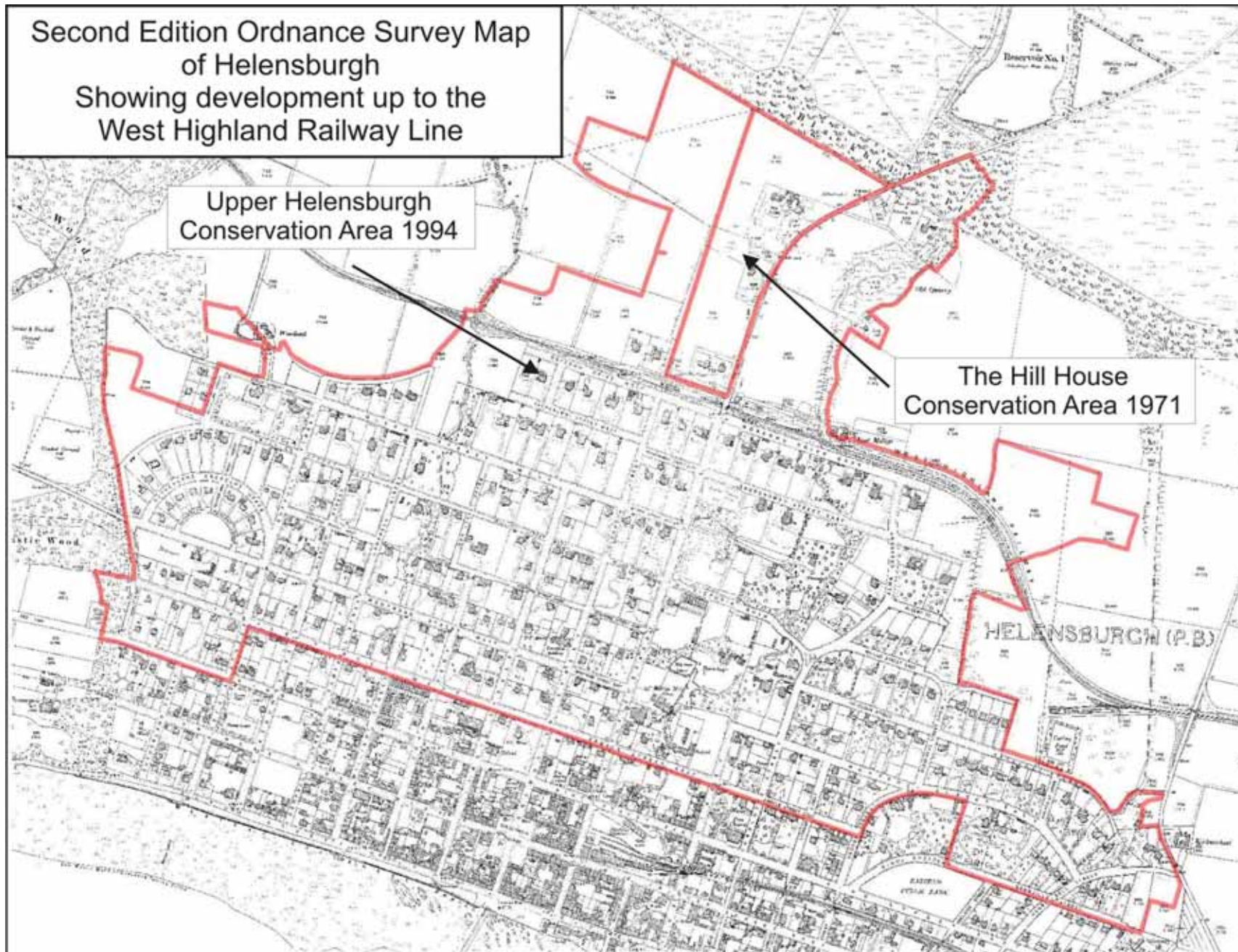
1860-1879

The majority of plots developed to the west, east and north (up to the West Highland Railway) in the 1860s and 1870s are estimated to be half, one or 1½ acres in area. The grid of two acre square-ish blocks was continued up the hill north of Queen Street between Colquhoun Street and Sinclair Street but on either side, it gave way to rectangular blocks, the long axes of which run across the slope. This is thought to be part of the Spence design.

The plots continued to be feued for the purpose of building detached dwellings and their associated outbuildings. They generally ran between two parallel straight streets or between the inner and outer curves of the crescents. (Osborne, B.D. C.1912).

The main villa developments of this phase took place north of Queen Street, in the Sutherland Crescent area to the west and on the east side of Alma Crescent (now Charlotte Street). The architect William Spence is said to have feued a substantial block of building land to the north of Abercromby Street in 1875 (Osborne, B.D. C.1912).

Development was started on part of the Hermitage Estate, in particular the original Hermitage School (opened 1880, demolished 1977), Prince Albert Terrace on Victoria Road and the Victoria Halls (1887). The remaining grounds are now Hermitage Park.



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Note: for more detail see insert

It appears that the commercial centre of the town was also substantially redeveloped during this period and up to World War 1 (WW1) (1914-18). A number of gap sites were filled with later tenements, often on an urban scale (in the Glasgow style), with a building stone that contrasted with earlier neighbours.

1880-1915

The block dimensions of the 1803 grid design were continued between Sinclair Street and Colquhoun Street up to West Duhill Drive, the last blocks to the north being determined by the curve of Sinclair Street/Luss Road and the earlier properties of Duhill (mid 19th century) and Duhill House (1847). Colquhoun Street, the main axis of the whole development, was continued right up to the burgh's northern edge at what is now the Blackhill Plantation.

The further development of the north side of Rossdhu Drive took off in the early 1880s, although the first plots were subsequently reduced in size by the cutting of the West Highland Railway. It appears that the typical large, pale sandstone Victorian villas, immediately on the north side of the West Highland Railway, were the last of their type to be built in the burgh (c.1883).

From 1880 onward, the main development was of individually commissioned large villas on large plots north of the West Highland Railway, with other plots developed to the east and west plus some vacant plots on existing streets. So, at a time when population growth was slowing, the villa developments were particularly low density and high prestige. There was a marked change of taste and fashion in architecture and interior design with the uptake of the ideas and practices of the English Arts and Crafts movement and a return to earlier Scottish roots with the Scottish Renaissance styles.



Autumn colours (1)

Jim Shimmins (2006)

The Topography of the Site



Milligs Burn running through Hermitage Park
Jim Shimmins (2006)



Houses on raised beach (Kings Crescent)

Development of Helensburgh's townscape and built environment

4.1 Introduction

This section sets out to summarise the development of the built environment from 1803 to the present day. However, this forms only part of the picture. The contribution of the planting of street trees in the grass verges, the broad grass verges themselves, the characteristics of plot boundaries, private garden grounds and public green spaces are major aspects of the townscape and crucial elements of its character. These topics are covered in Section 5.

Formal planning and controls were exerted on the built environment by Sir James Colquhoun of Luss (26th Baronet of Luss and 1st of GB) and his successors as landowner and feudal superior. After the granting of the Burgh Charter by George III in 1802 the administration of the town became the responsibility of the Town Council, although the Colquhoun family remained involved. As the Burgh expanded, the Colquhoun family was asked from time to time to grant land for various development purposes. The Colquhouns also built bridges at their own expense in order to facilitate expansion of the town.

4.2 The topography of the site and its relationship to the street lay-out

Helensburgh's street grid has been superimposed on a landform of gently sloping beach terraces punctuated by steeper slopes, the remnants of raised beach cliffs. The elevation change between the shore and the top of Helensburgh at The Hill House is 300ft.

Quoting Roberts 2002:

"As the ice melted and ran out into the seas, the sea level rose. The land, relieved of its burden of ice, was uplifted. This happened intermittently causing a series of changes in the relative levels of land and sea. The result is a terrace of beach deposit, inland of the present shoreline, and raised beach cliffs. Lower Helensburgh from King Street seawards and the Ardencaple estate are on the former beach terrace..... Walking up Sinclair Street or Colquhoun Street you will come to a steep bit between King Street and Argyle Street, which represents the cliff, at Queen Street is another steep bit and just above the Highland railway is another."

The Glennan and Milligs Burns have cut into this post-glacial landform, particularly at the steeper sections. These burns are not a major feature of the townscape as they largely run through private property or between plots, except for Hermitage Park which has a section of the Milligs Burn. They may in places be seen from street bridges and the trees on their steep banks form a green corridor. In the lower part of the town, the burns are largely built over. There are a number of other, much smaller watercourses, largely out of public view.

One axis of the original grid runs approximately north north-east up the slope from the estuary shore while the other lies across the slope, following the natural contours and more or less parallel to the shore. Some lateral streets such as Millig Street are built on beach terraces; in other cases there has probably been some infill to provide the fairly level roads. Some of the irregularities in the street grid are due to the underlying landform e.g. the steep slope above Kings Crescent.

The result of the use of a grid lay-out on south facing, sloping ground is the highly effective exploitation of the site to provide exceptional vistas both from many properties (where not now obscured by trees) and down many of the streets sloping towards the Clyde. A number of the lateral streets provide fine views of farmland and heather clad hills in the surrounding area.

The shoreline (outside the current Conservation Areas) has been extensively modified starting with the building of the Dumbarton to Portincaple road in the 18th century. Subsequent development has included the construction of the Helensburgh and Craigendoran piers, the esplanades on the East and West Bays, reclaimed land around Helensburgh pier, retaining walls, groins and the outflows of storm drains on the foreshore.

4.3 Property and plot size, building density, distribution and orientation

According to Battrum's Guide (1867), although the development plots in Helensburgh were originally to be sold off in quarter acre feus it was not long before variety began to creep in, with some people buying double plots to build small mansions. Also, the street layout became less rigid as time went on and development encroached further and further up the hill. Historically, in very general terms, the density of development reduced the higher up the hill it was.

Broadly speaking:

- Pre 1860, the very large grounds feued were adjacent to the Glennan Burn, and between Sinclair Street and the Milligs Burn, e.g. Hermitage Estate estimated at about 27 acres; Lansdowne Park, Chapel Acre, Burnbrae and Westburn of 3 to 4 acres (referring to the first O.S. map).
- In general, the later phases of development, even including the inter war period, are characterised by larger plot sizes of ½ or 1 acre and a more uniform building line along the slope. Feuing conditions required that buildings be a minimum of 20 ft from the plot boundary, although in

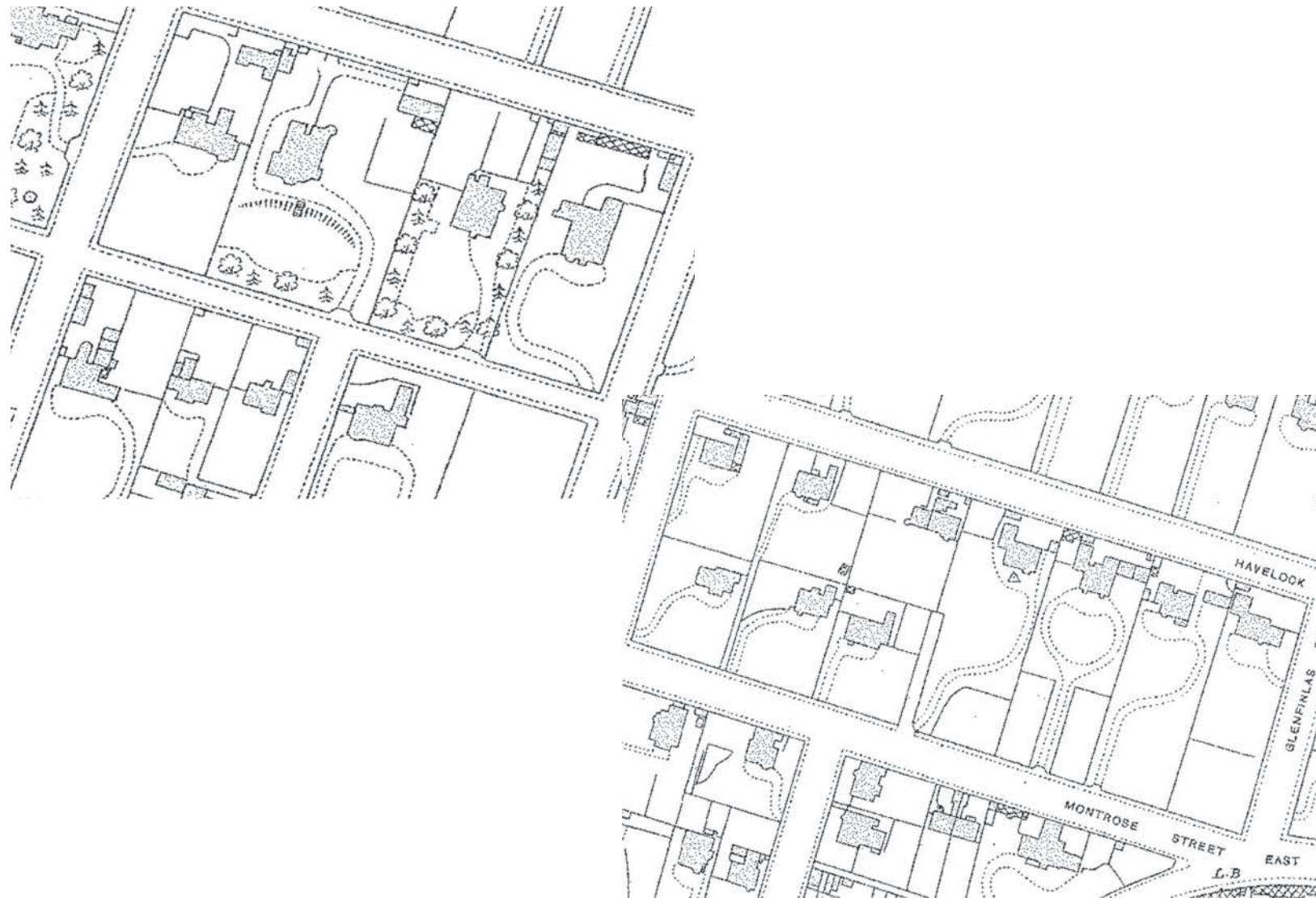
practice outbuildings were still constructed along rear boundaries.

- Moving up the hill, the great majority of properties face southwards towards the estuary.

To the south, between Argyle Street and the sea front, the conditions and pattern of feuing permitted a higher density of development and variety of types and uses of buildings. This was the area covered by the original development plan of 1803. However, the first Ordnance Survey map about 60 years later suggests that the ground sold off was not always in multiples of the plots shown on the 1803 plan. Development occurred at different stages and there was considerable infill in the late 19th century. For example, the terraced town houses of Glenan Gardens and other properties in that block almost surround the two much earlier houses built on the two acre square.

As the villa developments spread up the hill, villas were generally positioned to exploit the sloping ground and views over the lower town and the Clyde Estuary. They were often positioned towards the rear of the plots resulting in terraces of detached villas all facing in the same direction. The different types of boundary, entrance, architectural character (often vernacular in style at the rear), building stone of the house walls and finish of the stone comparing the front and rear of the properties means that there is a marked contrast between the south and north sides of many of the lateral streets. This is a distinctive feature of Helensburgh's townscape.

Extracts from the First Edition Ordnance Survey map showing layouts of houses and gardens



Types of residential property



Prior to mid 19th century



Mid 19th century – early 1880s



Post 1880s

Top: Allan Carrie (2006)
Others: Jim Shimmins (2006)

More specifically, the Conservation Areas fall into three zones in terms of building density, plot size and street lay-out:

- 1) The main grid south of the West Highland Railway and west of Sinclair Street. This in turn has higher density lower down the hill and lower density higher up but without a distinct break between the two (Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area).
- 2) The area east of Sinclair Street comprising a few dense blocks lower down, the areas originally developed as large properties in particularly large grounds, mid to late Victorian, Edwardian and post Edwardian villa developments, typically on plots of half an acre or larger (Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area).
- 3) Mostly Edwardian and post Edwardian period villas on large plots (The Hill House Conservation Area).

4.4 Types of residential property

This section provides a summary of property types grouped according to the main development phases.

1776 – mid 19th century

- Georgian, Regency and early Victorian plain 3-bay villas, stone or whitewashed stone
- 1½ storey houses, sometimes whitewashed but often left with the local sandstone exposed; cottage or vernacular character with dormer windows but often spacious e.g. 7 or 8 apartment.
- Single storey cottages with or without attics, mostly outside the current Conservation Areas.

Mid 19th century – early 1880s

- Main period of Victorian villa development typically two full storeys in height and with increased use of imported blonde sandstone, at least for front façades, from the late 1850s. Wash-houses and outbuildings are often of vernacular style

- The more prestigious properties were individually commissioned from reputed architects. At the start of this phase, the favoured styles for domestic architecture were Classical, Italianate, and Tudor revival.

Early 1880s – WW1 (1914-1918)

- Mostly villas were individually commissioned; others were built in small groups by the same architect/developer. Scots Baronial gave way to the Arts and Crafts movement, the buildings of which could have either Scottish or English architectural references, and sometimes both
- Infill terraced development occurred on larger plots and redeveloped sites in the lower town and on Hermitage Estate e.g. Prince Albert Terrace, Victoria Road; Glenan Gardens; properties on West King Street. These have architectural features typical of Scottish Victorian town developments of 1880-1900 but are an anomaly in the setting of Helensburgh's period villas. A number of earlier villas were extended during this phase, often in a contrasting architectural style.

The Inter-War Years (1918-1937)

- Mostly detached villas influenced by the English Arts and Crafts style or with Art Deco influences e.g. window design.

4.5 Architectural development from 1880 to the present

The large properties of 1880-1915

The first listed building in the Arts and Crafts style dates from c1881 and the great majority of villas that followed were influenced by major proponents of the Arts and Crafts movement (e.g. R. Norman Shaw and Charles Voysey) and their Scottish counterparts such as Robert Lorimer, who was a leading figure of the progression from the Scots Baronial revival to a style of house building based on vernacular architecture

The architects were almost all Scottish. The White House, Upper Colquhoun Street, one of only two commissions in Scotland by the English architect M. H. Baillie Scott, is the exception. Three architects, resident in the Burgh, William Leiper, A. N. Paterson and Robert Wemyss (who trained with Leiper), were responsible for the majority of large villas of the late Victorian/Edwardian and post Edwardian periods. Prominent Glasgow firms accounted for others. Leiper and Paterson both designed houses for themselves. Leiper built Terpersie (1871); Paterson built first a group of villas at Rowallan Street / Millig Street (1895) and then

Longcroft in West Rossdhu Drive (1901). In this group of houses may be found both Scottish and English historic architectural references (sometimes both in the same building), building traditions and materials. The majority borrow from early English building styles, including timber framing, and many of these have red rosemary tiled roofs rather than local or Ballachulish slate.

These houses provide the setting of, and a counterpoint to, two important buildings that introduced new ideas. By far the more radical of these is The Hill House (Mackintosh) which is Scottish in its architectural references rather than the White House (Baillie Scott) which is very English. The Hill House (1902), Charles Rennie Mackintosh's most important commission for a private house, was built on one of the most prestigious sites for the publisher Walter Blackie. The client explicitly rejected the English styles (Cairney, J. 2004).

"...I told him [i.e. CRM] that I didn't like red-tiled roofs, brick and plaster with wooden beams – I preferred roughcast for the walls and slates for the roof...."

The Hill House



Jim Shimmins (2006)

The use of the site, its position at the highest point of Colquhoun Street, the nature of the boundaries of the property and the contrast with the other large villas nearby all serve to increase the impact of The Hill House.

The Inter-War Period (1918-1937)

Despite the depressed economic situation in the west of Scotland and the impact of the stock market crash of 1929, some further development of individual villas took place, for example on ½ - 1 acre plots on West and East Lennox Drives and at the west end of Millig Street. Most are modest compared to the pre World War 1 buildings. However, there are two listed villas:

- Ballytrim, Arts and Crafts, 1926 (Sinclair Street, (upper end)
- Green Park, Art Deco, 1935 (Charlotte Street, on the site of a Victorian villa destroyed by fire)

Most of the other villas built in these decades were more modest but still substantial. Bell systems and maids' quarters indicate a segment of society that still used domestic service, often live-in, on a daily basis. This largely disappeared with World War 2.

Developments and changes after WW 2 (1945)

Relatively little change occurred in the inter-war period affecting the period properties and streetscape of the villa developments in upper Helensburgh. However, the Second World War was a turning point.

The economic and social conditions after WW 2 appear to have depressed overall demand for larger properties, not least because of the demands of upkeep on a daily basis. By this stage, many properties were already 100 years old and many had roofs in poor condition requiring major repairs. Some villas were subdivided, mostly into upper and lower conversions. As a result, external side and rear staircases, built to provide separate entrances, are now common. The design of some villas permitted partitioning to give adjoining dwellings. In other cases, outbuildings have been converted and added to. Examples of this exist on Sinclair Street, James Street and Queen Street.

Modern infill and adjacent housing estates

Accelerating changes in the region during the 1960s and 1970s resulted in an influx of people living on the newly-built estates on the outskirts of town, depressed prices of old houses due to lack of mortgage availability (affordable to buy but not to maintain) and new, affordable timber-framed houses, with mortgage availability.

The inflation of new house prices over this period, together with the availability of plots within the feus of larger properties, led to a considerable amount of infill over a relatively short period of time. These houses, typically detached bungalows, may be found to the front, to the side or to the rear of the original villa, depending on the shape of the plot and the position of the original house within it.

From a heritage and architectural point of view, it is the property built in front gardens that intrudes most on the historic streetscape. New build in the grounds of a villa can lead to a loss of integrity of the villa. A villa is a house set within its own designed garden, the two being interconnected and together create a particular character. By altering one, you affect the other.

From a planning perspective, the 1995 Dumbarton District Wide Local Plan (West Dunbartonshire Council 1999) is informative:

4.57 "Within both Conservation Areas covering Helensburgh pressures for house/or plot sub-division have in the past sometime created an alien architecture with inferior designs poorly related to their surroundings which have in certain locations detracted from the area's character".

Concerns over infill are commonly expressed on several counts:

- over-development
- pressures for house subdivision
- pressures for plot subdivision
- alien architecture
- inferior designs
- location as a key factor

Such concerns are further validated by the list of more specific aspects collected from people, both familiar with or visiting the area (fresh eyes) – see **Appendix D**.

The impact of the modern houses is thus three fold:

- architectural: types of structure, style and building materials
- building density and spatial relationships
- loss of garden ground and plantings.

While it would be interesting to map the degree of densification and to assess the visual impact street by street, such a survey is beyond the scope of this Appraisal. There is evidence and some comfort that densification has been contained.

Period from 1980s to the present

Although damaging, the period of rapid development in the 1970s was relatively short-lived as measures were taken by Dumbarton District to counter the problems. The 1995 Local Plan (West Dunbartonshire Council 1999) stated that:

“An Interim Policy Statement was introduced in 1980 for Upper Helensburgh the policies of which were incorporated in revised form in Local Plan No. 2 and the whole area subsequently designated as being within a Conservation Area. Since the introduction of these policies, there has been a marked improvement in the layout and design of development in terms of plot size and the provision of an independent frontage compatible with those of neighbouring properties. The aim of the policies to secure adequate plots has generally been successful in ensuring ‘town cramming’ of a townscape notable for having large house

plots, does not occur. The above policy also requires that the design of such new-plotted development also complements the prevailing architectural features and preserves the character of the area. The continued implementation of these policies covering the Conservation Areas within Helensburgh is considered necessary to retain the townscape features of the town”.

The strictness of these planning policies, while stemming much that was undesirable during the 1970s still produced some perverse effects in the siting of houses on plots. While obeying the rules, some new buildings do not respect the overall “pattern”. For example, where three large executive houses have been built on the site of a former mansion when two would have been better. While each house sits on the required area of land the addition of one extra house disrupts the pattern and character.

Policies which have now been in operation for 20 years have held at bay what could have turned into a major disaster. Over this period, other new build has continued but at a much reduced rate due to scarcity and the elevated price of any land for sale. Generally more up-market “executive-style” houses, not bungalows, have been built which have been much more, though by no means entirely, sympathetic to the Conservation Areas. Only two of the modern houses are noted as being of architectural merit (Walker, F.A. and Sinclair, F. 1992.) – Bowhouse, East Argyle Street (architect, Tony Vogt) and 40A Charlotte Street (architect, John McIntyre).

The Old and the New

There has been a considerable amount of infill over a relatively short period of time.

It is the property built into the front gardens that has the most impact upon the special qualities of the Conservation Areas.



Top: Jim Shimmins; Left: Andy Boag; Right: Michael Blake (2006)

Housing Estates

Modern housing estates built on green field sites now flank The Hill House Conservation Area: around Blackhill Drive, on the north side of Kennedy Drive, around Sinclair Drive and, to the east of the Milligs Burn, the Glade Estate. In some places, screening between the historic and modern developments is poor.

The relatively small development at Chapelacre Grove, largely tucked away off East Abercromby Street and occupying the site of the 19th century Chapel Acre House and its extensive grounds lies within the Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area. The scale of its detached houses and its block of flats reflects that elsewhere on the Conservation Area but the open-plan nature of its gardens and other open space contrasts strongly with the enclosed character of earlier houses in the vicinity.

4.6 Building materials – Walls and Roofs

Walling stone

A unifying characteristic of Helensburgh is the extensive use of local sandstone, typically reddish, pink or a warm pale grey in colour, which was extensively used for boundary walls and as a walling stone (Roberts, A. 2002). It was also used for the gable ends and backs of houses where the main façade is imported fine sandstone (to reduce cost). Some of the older houses and cottages are also of local stone, as is the West Kirk (1858) - except for the fine quoins, sills and mullions which would have been brought in from elsewhere.

Rubble was obtained from local conglomerate for which there were numerous small quarries in lower Helensburgh at one time. This was used to fill the spaces between uneven building blocks cleaved from the local sandstone. Some properties (even later ones such as The Hill House) were built of local stone and harling.

Red sandstone was imported from Bonhill, Arran (by sea) and Dumfriesshire. Once the Glasgow-Helensburgh railway was opened for goods traffic in 1857, building stone could be brought

in more cheaply from further afield. The more extensive use of a younger, pale honey coloured sandstone from the Glasgow quarries probably dates from this time. This stone was used for the Municipal Buildings, the Victoria Halls and residential properties in the upper west end.

Roofing materials

A second unifying feature is the extensive use of local slate from a large former slate quarry at Clynder and smaller ones in the vicinity of Rhu. These may be coloured purple, or grey-green. Similar slate from Luss and Aberfoyle is indistinguishable.

Ballachulish slate, darker and more uniform than the local slate, may be observed on later properties, including The Hill House. It may also have been used in the re-roofing of buildings that predate the railways.

Clay tiles were used only in Arts and Crafts style buildings as roofing or wall cladding materials. Tiles and bricks were all imported due to the lack of suitable local clay.

Streetscape, gardens and public spaces

5.1 Street trees

Introduction

A notable feature of Helensburgh is the extensive and mature plantings of avenues of trees that enhance the broad streets and their grass verges. The street tree plantings reinforce the grid layout, because they follow its form, and also soften its effect. The street trees both contrast with and complement the extensive plantings of trees and shrubs in private garden grounds. They provide continuity across the boundaries between public and private space, leading into wider vistas.

Deciduous species and cultivars predominate, in particular ornamental, flowering species. Most streets are planted with a single type of tree. In others, two species alternate and, in others, still a wider range of species was planted. This provides variety in the streetscapes with a change in character from street to street, coupled with seasonal variety and great seasonal interest throughout the year.

Much of the street tree planting is within the current Conservation Areas. However, there are important avenues of street trees that are partly or wholly excluded from the current Conservation Areas:

- Argyle Street, south side
- King Street, west and east sections beyond the commercial centre
- Princes Street, west and east sections beyond the commercial centre



Autumn foliage in Argyle Street



Autumn foliage in Queen Street

Jim Shimmins (2006)

History of the street trees

The history of street tree planting may be summarised as follows:

Pre 1860

Even prior to the major systematic plantings from the early 20th century onward, it is likely that some property owners did plant trees outside their gardens on the verges that they were responsible for maintaining. The 1860 Ordnance Survey map indicates that tree planting along plot boundaries was common. In a few instances there appear to be lines of trees just outside plot boundaries.

1860

A public meeting called for trees to be planted in the streets (Noble, S.N. (ed) 2002).

1883

There is a record of *“broad and carefully trimmed ribands of turf betwixt the sidewalks and the carriageway, several [of which] are planted, boulevard fashion with small trees “*. (Dingwall, C. 2002).

1910 – 1970s

There was planned planting of street trees with records of the work undertaken. A major phase of tree planting was initiated in 1910, the driving force being town councillor, Dr J. Ewing Hunter.

This approach was subsequently continued by Mr A. Campbell and Mr T. A. McColl, Parks Superintendents (McColl, T.A. 1972) up until the early 1970s. They were largely responsible for the extensive plantings of cherry trees. Tree planting was also continued in the post WW2 developments.

1970s – 2001

Helensburgh Burgh Council ceased to exist in 1975 due to the reorganisation of local government. The neglect of the street trees appears to date from this point.

2001

By this time many street trees had reached maturity or passed their prime, leading to a need for remedial action and a renewal programme. A number had died leaving gaps that had not been filled.

The Helensburgh Tree Conservation Trust was founded to promote public awareness of the importance of the street trees and stimulate action to conserve and enhance them.

2003

Donald Rodger Associates did a professional survey (dated Nov 2003) for the Helensburgh Tree Conservation Trust. Detailed information and accompanying maps (scale 1:10,000) were recorded for 1829 trees. The assemblage covers 103 species and varieties.

2005

A Helensburgh Street Trees Management Plan was prepared by Donald Rodger Associates for the Helensburgh Tree Conservation Trust. This sets out actions required over the next 30 years in order to manage and renew this outstanding asset of the town. The tree population is ageing and is at risk without such a renewal programme.

Cherry Trees in the Spring



Painting by Neil Macleod



Cherry blossom in West Argyle Street

Jim Shimmins (2006)

<i>Prunus Hisawara</i>	East & West Argyle Street & Lower Colquhoun Street with later plantings in Upper Colquhoun Street.
<i>Prunus Tai-haku</i>	East & West Princes Streets
<i>Prunus padus Watereri</i>	East King Street
<i>Prunus Daikoku</i>	Henry Bell Street
<i>Prunus Ukon</i>	Lower Sutherland Street
<i>Prunus Yoshina</i>	East Abercromby Street
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Campbell Street & George Street
<i>Prunus Oku Miyaku</i>	Upper George Street
<i>Prunus Shiroyugena</i>	Stafford Street
<i>Prunus cerasifera Pissardii</i>	James Street & Cairndhu Avenue

The elevation change of 300 ft means that there is a difference of approximately 1 week between the shore and the top of the town in the opening of the blossom. The progression of the pink blossom up the hill is a particular feature of Colquhoun Street in spring.

Street tree plantings – particular features

The first major avenue to be planted appears to have been the silver birch trees lining West Montrose Street, dating from 1910. This has long since become an impressive avenue of stately trees.

Outstanding among Helensburgh's ornamental flowering trees are the cherry trees. At their peak with the spring blossom, they also provide an attractive green summer canopy and impressive autumn colour that can last well into November. Important avenues are:

The conservation significance of Helensburgh's street trees

The Helensburgh Street Trees Management Plan (Rodger, D. 2005) includes the following assessment of the significance of Helensburgh's street trees and the streetscape overall:

"...a special and highly distinctive urban landscape arguably unrivalled anywhere else in Scotland. The 'old town' in particular has its own landscape character and the combination of well-treed gardens and the substantial population of street trees creates an attractive setting which complements and enhances the architectural heritage of the town."

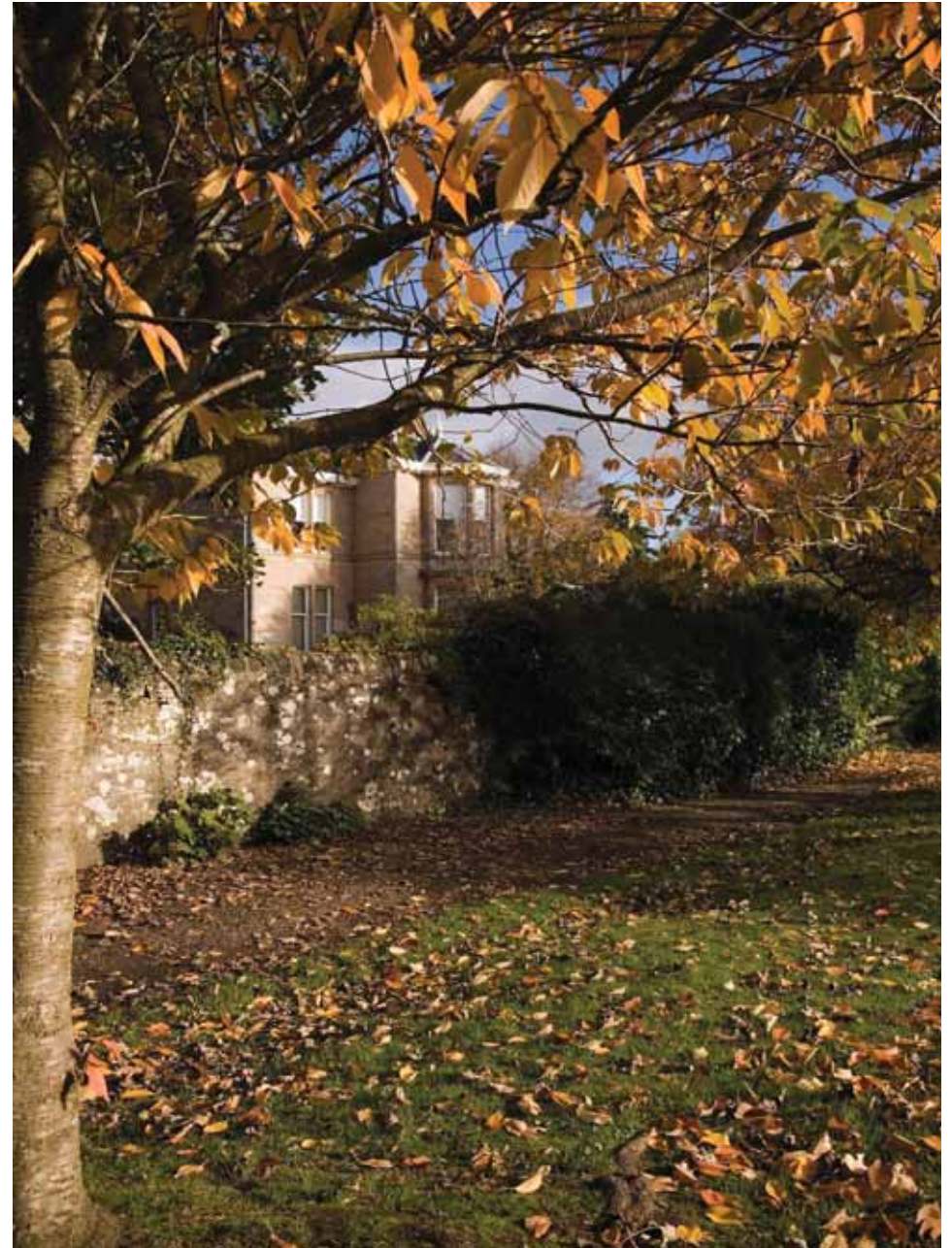
Helensburgh's street layout, verges and tree plantings constitute a notable historic designed landscape of exceptional conservation significance.

Risks to Helensburgh's street trees and streetscape

The tree population is ageing and the quality of the streetscape will steadily be eroded unless a renewal programme of the type set out in the Helensburgh Street Trees Management Plan 2005 is followed.

Some early actions have been taken and new trees planted but the labour and maintenance requirements over the long term are considerable.

Resources for this long-term programme are highly uncertain.



Autumn Colours (2)

Jim Shimmins

The original walling stone is predominantly the warm coloured, local sandstone contrasting with the colour provided by the variety of types of hedging that may be seen. Many properties have highly decorative gates and gate piers, some of which are listed as being of special architectural or historic interest in their own right..

The hedges are mostly evergreen, commonly privet, but there are a number of beech and mixed hedges too. Double hedges are a feature of a number of properties.

Contribution of private gardens to the streetscape

While in many cases private gardens are largely screened by boundary plantings, others are not so enclosed and views into attractive private gardens are a feature of Helensburgh streets.

Much of Helensburgh was developed around the time Scottish and other plant hunters were exploring different regions of the world and introducing new species into cultivation in the UK. The botanist Sir William Hooker and his son Joseph (later Sir Joseph Hooker, botanist and explorer (1817-1911) had associations with Helensburgh and were summer residents for a time:

Hooker encouraged gardeners in the West of Scotland to grow his Himalayan rhododendrons from seed – with great success. He was fond of comparing the Sikkim Himalaya with the Clyde of his youth. From one Himalayan setting, he wrote ‘What puts me most in mind of Helensburgh is the universality of fine weather on Sundays’ (Vickerman, K. and Richmond, L. 2005).

Garden Settings



Top: Michael Blake (2006). Others: Jim Shimmins (2006)

Mansion to the East of Sinclair Street

The area east of Sinclair Street comprises typically villa developments on plots of half an acre or larger



Helensburgh has climatic and soil conditions that permit the cultivation of a similar range of trees, shrubs and smaller garden plants to that found in the major west coast gardens of Argyll and Bute. Indeed, many local residents regularly purchase specimens propagated from these and other collections. The level of interest in terms of the design and planting of individual Helensburgh gardens does vary. However, even relatively small gardens may contain several hundred specimens and be of real botanical interest.

At one end of the scale plantings include forest giants from around the world such as redwoods, Douglas and silver firs, Scots and introduced pines, cedar of Lebanon, hemlocks, monkey puzzle and Eucalyptus plus deciduous species ranging from native broad-leaved species to the Chinese dawn redwood.

At the other end of the scale a great variety of bulbs and herbaceous plants are grown, right down to the tiniest alpiners.

Despite the cool, damp climate, a wide range of habitats exists. Local ground conditions vary depending on whether the plot is on clay or on one of the raised beaches. Even species adapted to arid conditions such as bristlecone pines may be grown outside in the right spot. An example of the variety within gardens in two streets is provided in **Appendix E**.

The list of larger trees in Helensburgh may be expected to include many specimens 100 years old and more. Many of the species reach 100ft and upwards at maturity. While the large number of stately trees contribute greatly to the townscape, where they are close to houses they can be oppressive to residents, block views, cast excessive shade over both houses and gardens and be out of scale with the size of plot in which they grow. Informed management of these more mature trees is to be recommended.

Medium sized trees and larger shrubs, often planted around plot boundaries, make a major contribution to the streetscape and vistas around the town. Popular ornamental trees and shrubs (a wide range of species and varieties) include Magnolias, Rhododendrons, Acers, Camellias, Pieris, rowans, birches, flowering cherries, Laburnum and hollies.

Somewhat more specialised are the Eucryphias, Crinodendrons, Embotriums, Cordylines and Pittosporums. These groups may be regarded as significant trees and shrubs that make a major contribution to the special character of the townscape.

Survey work would establish the species and varieties represented in Helensburgh gardens, the extent of plantings of significant species and varieties, important formal plantings (e.g. along driveways), and the overall botanical interest of the gardens. Also, street by street surveys would establish local characteristics which vary greatly from one place to another, even between the north and south sides of the lateral streets. The Conservation Area Management Plan would benefit from such analysis.

Walls, hedges, gates & gate-piers



5.2 Plot boundaries and private gardens

Introduction

Plot boundaries and private gardens contribute immeasurably to the green and leafy streetscape of Helensburgh and provide a considerable, varied habitat for wildlife. There is a particularly strong horticultural tradition in the town extending from the original layout of the garden grounds through to the present day.

The layout of gardens and grounds is indicated on the Ordnance Survey map of 1860. Today there are numerous examples where the layout, built structures and planting are still typical of the particular period. However many plots have been subdivided, layouts changed and structures lost.

In the case of the properties built from 1880 onwards, architects typically paid a great deal of attention to garden design as an extension to, and setting of, the main house. Original garden designs exist for at least some properties within the Local Collection in Helensburgh Library. The garden of The Hill House (Charles Rennie Mackintosh) has been carefully rejuvenated, including the reinstatement of an orchard, under the stewardship of the National Trust for Scotland.

Boundaries

The conditions of feu for the private properties specified that plots should be enclosed and, taken together, the boundary hedges and walls extend for some tens of miles. The nature of these boundaries makes a major contribution to the distinctive streetscape of Helensburgh.

Top: Andy Boag (2006),. Others: David Sheen (2007)

5.3 Parks

Hermitage Park

Hermitage Park, situated on the east side of Sinclair Street is formed from part of the grounds of the original Hermitage Estate, part of which was sold off for development in the late 19th century. A recent assessment of the history, development and condition of the park found that Hermitage Park is of considerable heritage significance (Davis, M. 2002 and Dingwall, C. 2002).

The park is part of the former extensive landscaped grounds of Hermitage House, one of the largest of Helensburgh's villa developments. It is the setting for the Category A listed walled garden that contains the war memorial designed by the architect A. N. Paterson.

Hermitage Park augments the private villa gardens and plantings of street trees which combine to contribute to Helensburgh's unique streetscape.

Unfortunately the park seems to be somewhat degraded due to over planting in the late 20th century and insufficient maintenance that have resulted in the loss of internal views of features (such as the cascades of the Milligs Burn) and external views of the estuary. There are also some unattractive and poorly maintained modern features and structures.

Walker's Rest

Walker's Rest is a small park accessed from the top of Sinclair Street on the east side.

Hermitage Park



Jim Shimmins (2007)

Parks and public spaces outside the current Conservation Areas

There are other public parks and open spaces outside the current Conservation Areas that are part of the historic development of the town:

- Helensburgh Cemetery (relatively small scale and not extensively planted compared to other 'garden cemeteries' of the 19th century)
- East End Public Park, East King Street – a recreation ground gifted by a local benefactor
- Kidston Park – small park with spectacular views at the western end of the West Bay promenade, also gifted by a local benefactor.
- James Street – small play park, also donated by a local benefactor.
- Duchess Wood—a major recreational resource and Local Nature Reserve
- Castle Wood—an ancient woodland site
- East Bay Esplanade
- Kirkmichael Park

5.4 The significance of Helensburgh's historic designed landscape

Helensburgh's street layout, verges and tree plantings alone constitute a historic designed landscape of exceptional conservation significance. This is augmented by the extent of the private gardens and the plantings within them.

The features of private grounds that fall within the criteria for historic designed landscapes are the:

- structure provided by the street grid and the feuing pattern within the grid
- boundary walls and hedges put in place according to the design of the street grid and the applicable conditions of feu
- stipulations of the conditions of feu resulting in low density

of development and considerable garden ground

- the extensive consequential plantings of trees and shrubs just inside plot boundaries, albeit according to individual choice.

The features that may be considered of historic and botanical interest are:

- the contribution of Helensburgh gardeners of the 19th century and later as a group to the more general introduction of plants new to cultivation in Scotland beyond the formal botanical collections. This is likely to have been disproportionate.
- the connection with the prominent 19th century botanists Sir William and Sir Joseph Hooker, and their likely influence on botanical collections and gardening in the West of Scotland (enquiry to Helensburgh Library, Local Collection; Mike and Sue Thornley, Glenarn, Rhu from enquiries to Kew Gardens, London in 2000)
- the great number and variety of ornamental trees and shrubs visible from the streets, often impressive, mature specimens
- the range of signature trees and shrubs which define particular areas widely planted across the town
- the overall botanical interest, albeit much is largely not on public view.

Street and Garden Trees

Helensburgh's street layout, verges and tree plantings alone constitute a historic designed landscape of exceptional conservation importance. This is augmented by the extent of the private gardens and the plantings within them



Jim Shimmins (2006)

5.5 Traffic flow

The tranquillity of much of the two Conservation Areas is an essential part of their character. It enables enjoyment of the attractive and varied streetscapes by all who choose to wander around.

Traffic passing through the Conservation Areas mainly uses Sinclair Street, West Montrose Street and Charlotte Street. School traffic appears to be increasing and particularly affects John Street, Queen Street and Millig Street. Traffic calming with speed bumps has been introduced here which has the effect of moving traffic on to other residential streets and creates a street scene which is at odds with the tranquil atmosphere of these streets.

Away from Sinclair Street, the distribution of footpaths around the streets is haphazard, with some of the paths between the grass verges and the boundary walls of properties being surfaced and clear of weeds, with others being allowed to grass over and others becoming wet and muddy. This leads to many pedestrians (including dog-walkers and joggers) going along the middle of the road.

Compared to similar areas in the major conurbations, the appearance of Helensburgh's historic residential district does not suffer from dense on-street parking despite high levels of car ownership.

As in New York, the grid pattern of streets in Helensburgh results in an exceedingly large number of crossroads. The character of any Conservation Area can be adversely affected by a clutter of road signs. While these should be adequate to maintain road safety, a balance needs to be struck with the amenity of the area. Large-scale development that would generate significantly increased traffic levels at these intersections should be discouraged.

The West Highland Railway provides a physical barrier to both pedestrian and vehicle movement between the two Conservation Areas. Pedestrian and cycle routes around Helensburgh could be greatly enhanced by a bridge across the railway at Colquhoun Street. Colquhoun Street could therefore become a direct pedestrian and cycle route between the sea front and Hill House. This was suggested in design projects executed in 2005 by students from the Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow School of Art as one of their suggested ways to regenerate the town.

Elements that detract from the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Areas

6.1 Introduction

All built environments are subject to alteration and change and are much influenced by prevailing socio-economic factors. Conservation Area status offers a certain degree of protection depending on objectives set by the planning guidelines of the period but they cannot cover all contingencies.

An important part of the Appraisal exercise has been consultation with the wider community. This section lists factors which have been brought to the attention of HCAG by residents and visitors as seeming to be out of character with the area. See Appendix D for further information.

6.2 Schedule of detracting elements

Many examples in the following lists may seem relatively minor and insignificant when viewed individually, but taken together have a cumulative detrimental impact on the overall pattern and sense of place of the Conservation Areas.

New Buildings, division of feus

- modern bungalows built in the front gardens of large mansions
- dominant horizontal line of modern (bungalows especially) and landscape windows, out of character with portrait windows of traditional buildings
- small modern buildings out of scale with larger buildings and in own plot of land
- new buildings which obscure the view of old houses
- the poor quality design of new buildings
- the building on of external staircases of an unsympathetic design and materials
- the division of feus leading, in some cases, to inappropriate planting and fencing

Alterations to Buildings

Over the years, the traditional character of buildings has been eroded by:

- replacement windows not retaining original design or being constructed of unsuitable materials
- UPVC windows of non-traditional proportions
- use of brightly-coloured renderings and paints not in keeping with surrounding natural materials
- removal of the ornate bargeboards of Victorian houses
- replacement of traditional guttering with UPVC
- replacement of local slates with unsympathetic alternatives
- garages of a temporary nature – corrugated iron, asbestos, etc.
- addition of unsympathetic and ill-proportioned (often mock-Victorian) conservatories
- removal / replacement of chimneys
- erosion caused in general by loss of quality in materials, craftsmanship and design.

Changes to the landscape within feus:

- subdivision of plot to south of main façade of original building
- loss of mature trees where a new house has been built
- replacement of hedging by fences
- replacement of characteristic privet/beech/ hawthorn/holly hedging by conifer
- high conifer hedging which has gone out of control
- loss of stone walls- replacement by artificial stone
- paved/ asphalted driveways, many intruding onto road
- modern gates.

Visual pollution of streetscape:

- traffic signage is particularly intrusive – speed signs, one-way signs, yellow lines, speed bumps
- street lights are unsympathetic
- loss of grass verges to parking spaces
- car parking on the streets
- grass verges not kept up
- missing and unhealthy trees in verges
- trees of a different species destroying overall pattern
- replacement street name plates of an inferior quality
- the lack of mature trees where modern bungalows have been built in front of mansions.

Dereliction and loss of historic buildings:

- deterioration and dereliction of buildings
- demolition of neglected buildings
- pressure to re-develop plots



Managing Change

7.1 Introduction

This section looks at the factors that will influence change in the Conservation Areas over the next few years. It builds on the schedule of detracting elements (set out in Section 6 above) and looks at the vulnerability of Helensburgh's Conservation Areas, together with the pressures upon their special architectural and historic character and appearance.

In the course of the work to date, the Group has identified a number of key issues on which it would be helpful to make more progress. While some issues will need to be addressed through the planning system (as part of day-to-day Development Management), others will require the co-ordinated efforts of various agencies through a management plan. Indeed, this section of the Appraisal is expected to inform the development of a brief for the future Conservation Areas Management Plan.

People undertaking work in the Conservation Areas can bring about change. If the character of the Conservation Areas is to be preserved and enhanced it is important that they are aware of the significance of the Conservation Areas and what makes them special.

7.2 Cumulative effect of piecemeal changes

Many changes that have occurred since WW2 are relatively small scale. Some fall within the scope of the planning and development control system and some not. While some of these changes are of an appropriate nature from a conservation point of view or are sited where they do not impinge on the appearance of the area, others are more intrusive or have resulted in the loss of original features.

The cumulative effect of deleterious changes is significant erosion of character. Examples include the erection of garages, conservatories, extensions, replacement windows, replacement gutters and down pipes, exterior painting and changes to garden grounds. A significant risk to boundary walls and streetscapes can result from the sub-division of property or new buildings within existing plots due to the need to provide additional street accesses and parking facilities.

There is a significant continuing risk of further loss of original features and failure to replace them according to conservation principles.

Window replacement is continuing, driven by the greater insulation properties of modern double-glazing, as much as the need to repair deterioration. Neither the appearance of the glass nor the quality of the timber used even in the 1930s can be readily replicated today. Article 4 directions in respect of windows apply in The Hill House Conservation Area but not currently in the Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area.

Boundary walls, gates and piers are also at risk from lack of maintenance and changing fashions in landscape design. As households now often have several cars and other vehicles, there is likely to have been a significant loss of garden ground to hard standing for vehicles and boats.

Some of these changes, which would normally be regarded as "permitted development", can be brought under the planning system. During the Review and Management Plan process desirability of controlling these minor changes by means of Article 4 Directions should be considered.

7.3 Current development issues and the design of new-build

Pressures for development in the Helensburgh Conservation Areas relate to:

- new residential development within the gardens of large houses
- sub-division of large houses into flatted accommodation
- change of use of large houses to nursing homes or small hotels
- re-development of sites where the principle building has been damaged or destroyed by fire.

Dealing with these issues in such a way as to ensure a future for the buildings and maintenance of the character of the Conservation Areas will be a major challenge, but one that needs to be confronted.

The new Local Plan looks to the guidance set out in the four volumes of the new Argyll and Bute Sustainable Design Guidance (2006) and to Conservation Area Appraisals such as this one. The four volumes of Argyll and Bute Council's Sustainable Design Guidance will be helpful in supporting this Appraisal document when considering proposals for change in the Conservation Areas.

In particular, there is a page in Volume 3 (*Working with the Historic Built Environment*) that is specific to the Helensburgh Conservation Areas. Here, the emphasis is on location and design, rather than density. Which is reflected in the emerging Argyll and Bute Local Plan

Design Guidance

Argyll and Bute Council's *Sustainable Design Guidance* published in 2006 shows (particularly in Volume 3 *Working with the Historic Built Environment*) how good modern architecture can be achieved within a historic context without

copying the past but by respecting the character and appearance of the neighbourhood. We recommend this approach within the Helensburgh Conservation Areas and urge anyone considering developing here to look especially at the page covering Helensburgh itself (page 47).

7.4 Maintenance of public and private property

There are good examples in Helensburgh of exemplary maintenance, reinstatement, enhancement and even major renovation projects of very large properties and their grounds. The Victoria Halls have been greatly improved by work undertaken by both the Local Authority and a voluntary body, the Friends of the Victoria Halls.

Adequate maintenance will reduce the need for large-scale, expensive works. Lack of planned maintenance will result in rapid deterioration. Some buildings have been neglected, demonstrating that standards and practice are highly variable. This applies to:

- prevention of deterioration in the first place e.g. through adequate roof ventilation and maintenance, sub-floor ventilation, protecting exterior timber and routine maintenance of all types
- early remediation e.g. fixing leaks promptly, replacing deteriorated roofing felt, ensuring pointing is sound both on the main buildings and boundary walls
- rectifying long term deterioration e.g. corroded zinc and lead; ground floor joist ends affected by wet rot (a common problem); corrosion of roofing nails; cracking, spalling and crumbling of clay tiles.

The measures whereby the Council can deter owners from allowing buildings to become derelict or important internal features being removed need to be considered.

The Recently Repaired Victoria Halls



Painting by Neil Macleod

7.5 Management of the public realm

Those organisations and individuals responsible for maintaining and up-grading the public spaces that bind the Conservation Areas together - from its grid of streets to its public park - need to work together to preserve and enhance the special qualities that have been set out earlier in this document.

Designed landscapes, street trees, verges & footpaths

Part of the designed landscape of the town is the use of street trees. Plans for the maintenance of these are an essential part of the maintenance of the character of the area. Similarly, the maintenance of Hermitage Park is an important issue. Adequate funding arrangements need to be put in place to ensure that future of Helensburgh's open spaces is safeguarded.

The requirement for a long term programme of replacement and management of the street trees has been set out by the Helensburgh Tree Conservation Trust. A long-term planting and maintenance programme has been developed. If it is not implemented, there will be a fairly rapid, further loss of this essential element of a historic designed landscape of exceptional conservation importance. The Conservation Areas Management Plan will prescribe appropriate action.

Hermitage Park has many fine mature species. However, over the years some parts have become oppressively dense. How best the park can be managed to meet its purposes should be covered by the Conservation Areas Management Plan process

The Conservation Areas Management Plan should ensure co-ordinated management and surfacing regimes for the many grass verges and footpaths (both un-made and surfaced) that contribute so much to the special qualities of the Helensburgh Conservation Areas.

Street furniture

A number of on-going maintenance activities provide an opportunity to enhance the character of the Conservation Areas. The status of the Conservation Areas should be recognised by the local authority and the public utility companies through a higher standard of street furniture. The Conservation Areas Management Plan should specify such an approach. There is a clear need to explore how adaptations for modern living can be made without destroying historic features and their distinctive character.

Lighting

Street lighting in the Conservation Areas is not of consistent design and is of variable quality and condition. Replacing outworn street lights will provide an opportunity to enhance the streetscape. The design of good light fittings is one of the important ways to do this and is particularly important in The Hill House Conservation Area because of the potential World Heritage Site status.

Street names and signage

Much of the signage has recently been replaced, necessitated by the number of missing or unreadable street name signs. The new signs are very clear. Unfortunately, from a heritage point of view, the shape and word lay-out; lack of relief in the lettering, the materials and style of lettering are all out of character with the historic originals. Consideration should be given to higher quality and uniform street signs in the management plan.

The size, design and number of road traffic signs (particularly illuminated ones) should be kept to a minimum but ensuring the safety of all road users. How best this can be achieved at the numerous intersections within the Helensburgh Conservation Areas will need to be addressed by all parties.

Public Utilities

Public utility companies are usually exempt from planning controls when providing their services and need to be brought on board as willing partners in the stewardship of the Conservation Areas, through the Conservation Areas Management Plan process. Installations, especially large boxes in the streets, can be very obtrusive and need to be placed with the special qualities of the Conservation Areas in mind. Similarly, marker signs need to be placed more sympathetically, be better vandal-proofed and, above all, maintained well.

Any special surfaces should be reinstated permanently with the correct materials when trenching or repairs take place. Agreeing suitable materials and co-ordinating street works will be key to the preservation and enhancement of the Conservation Areas.

7.6 Monitoring change

Development Management decisions within the Conservation Areas will primarily be informed by adopted Council policy together with the approved Sustainable Design Guidance. This Appraisal and subsequent Management Plan, following approval by the Council, will further inform the decision making process as supplementary planning guidance relevant to Helensburgh's Conservation areas. In order for the Appraisal and the Management Plan to remain current and effective a monitoring system will need to be developed as is the case with planning policy. The Management Plan should consider factors such as:

- Changes in the use of buildings both within and outwith planning control
- Trends in planning applications
- Changes to the integrity of the overall pattern
- Figures for plot size, and trends in average plot sizes
- Cumulative effect of piecemeal changes such as the erection of garages and conservatories, building of extensions, replacement windows and replacement gutters / down pipes
- Analysis of the scope for further development
- Deterioration of buildings and materials.



The Public Realm
- signage



Ken Crawford (2006)

7.7 Other actions to be considered

There is also a need for information to be made more readily available. The means of ensuring awareness on the part of owners, occupiers, developers, the various Council departments and the suppliers of utilities need to be re-assessed for their effectiveness and new methods of working, as appropriate. There is scope for producing much more in the way of leaflets to inform the general public about the quality of the Conservation Areas and the importance of maintaining them. Additional advice to householders on property maintenance, traditional materials and building repair could help to reduce deterioration in the areas' character and appearance. It would also be useful to have published guidance on sourcing suitable replacements for such things as slates, tiles, windows and boundary features.

Adequate safeguards need to be put in place to prevent further erosion of the special qualities of these two Conservation Areas. The Council will also need to demonstrate that the setting of the Hill House is adequately protected in the event of a nomination for inclusion as part of a potential C.R. Mackintosh World Heritage Site.

It would be helpful if applicant submitted Design Statements setting out the impact of their proposed development.

Houses by A.N. Paterson outwith the Conservation Areas



Jim Shimmins (2006)

Boundary Reviews of the two Conservation Areas

8.1 Introduction

Argyll and Bute Council will review the boundaries of the two Conservation Areas in Helensburgh in light of this Appraisal. The Council will also ensure that the Hill House Conservation Area forms a suitable “buffer zone” for this potential World Heritage Site.

Any proposals for alterations to the boundaries will be the subject of further public consultation.

8.2 Boundary Issues

The following observations have been aired during the Appraisal’s consultation process.

The Hill House Conservation Area (potential World Heritage Site buffer zone)

Parts of the boundary may be unduly close to the subject. Indeed, part of the car park for The Hill House which is immediately adjacent to the garden lies outwith the Conservation Area (albeit within the Green Belt). The merits of an extension should be examined.

Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area

There is some obvious logic to most of the boundary which currently exists along the western, northern and eastern sides. The selection of the southern boundary seems more arbitrary. However, there are a number of points around the whole boundary where there is no marked difference between the character of the properties on either side of the boundary. It is suggested that these situations (listed in **Appendix F**) be examined closely.

A new or extended Conservation Area

The distribution of listed buildings in the town and the geographic spread of work by architects of renown are perhaps not adequately encompassed by the existing designations. Given the cohesiveness of the overall town plan and the pervasiveness of the special character throughout a much wider area than currently designated, the Review should examine the case for extension or additional designation(s).

In particular, the current Conservation Areas exclude:

- oldest buildings of the town, buildings of historic significance and a large number of listed buildings of diverse types including churches by important Scottish architects
- sites of the first large feus for residential properties between East Clyde Street and the shore (Regency period and mid 19th century listed buildings)
- non-listed properties, built primarily of local stone, in the lower town that date back to Helensburgh’s early days as a summer resort
- Victorian terraces of Craigendoran
- important plantings of street trees, including the cherry trees on the south side of Argyle Street
- Canary Houses by A.N. Paterson which lie on the west side of Rowallan Street and the north side of Millig Street.

Splitting the Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area

The current size of the Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area is acknowledged to be very large when compared to many other areas. It is also acknowledged in the historical review that because of the timeframe over which the development of the area took place, the sizes and layout of plots vary across the area. Splitting the area may provide an opportunity to identify more localised special characteristics

Conclusion

This Appraisal, being descriptive, has mainly covered those aspects that make the Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area and The Hill House Conservation Area so valuable both historically and architecturally and unique as an urban landscape. Overall, the area remains remarkably intact, the pattern is preserved as are a great proportion of the buildings. But, because it retains its extraordinary attraction, it has not remained static; changes have taken place and infill has occurred.

Throughout the process of compiling the Appraisal, undertaking consultation in various forms and mounting an exhibition a number of messages have come through that are worth bearing in mind as thought is given to how a management plan can be produced and implemented.

The first of these is that the Conservation Areas, despite their undoubted historical and architectural significance, are primarily places where people live and work. Without that duality of use, the Conservation Areas will not survive. In other words, in thinking about any proposed changes within a Conservation Area, it is important to remember that they must remain suitable for modern use.

The second thought is that some of the buildings within the Conservation Areas might not have received planning permission if an application were submitted in more recent times. The reasons for this are that the buildings are frequently very individualistic and in their day some of them were ground-breaking in terms of style and design.

If the Conservation Areas are to continue to evolve, it will be important to have scope for innovations in design if the long history of architectural evolution is to continue to unfold. Indeed, architectural innovation should be encouraged.

Many people commented on the privilege and penalties aspects of living in a Conservation Area. They recognise the privilege associated with living in quality houses of considerable architectural merit and of being part of an area of very pleasant aspect. They also understand that this imposes a duty to maintain these assets and the landscape in which they are set – even more so if they are in a listed building. In most cases, the call was for a degree of common sense in relation to proposed changes of use and fabric. Where building materials are exorbitantly expensive to replace, owners look for guidance on acceptable modern alternatives and on practical maintenance and repair.

A number of working papers have been assembled on many of the above issues and will be available for the Review Process. Suggestions for a raft of possible future actions that have been mooted at various points in the process of preparing this document and undertaking wider consultation are gathered together in Appendix G. This provides a great deal of food for thought in starting the process of producing a Management Plan for the Areas.

There is clearly very considerable support for and interest in the current Conservation Areas. A lively debate on how best to look after them into the future has already been initiated. This has built on work previously undertaken in connection with the activities of the Helensburgh Study Group (unpublished papers held in the local library) and the Vision Steering Group of the Helensburgh Community Council (unpublished papers held in the local library). In addition, Argyll and Bute Council commissioned work on the town centre and waterfront by the Yellow Book Consultants (Yellow Book 2004).



Cherry Blossom
Jim Shimmins

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Appendix A

Listed Buildings in the Conservation Areas

Full, up-to-date details may be found under “Helensburgh” on Historic Scotland's website at <http://hsewsf.sedsh.gov.uk/hslive>

Some entries (with the same reference number) have been included twice. This is because some corner plots which contain different properties (under different street names) and are all part of the same entry and share the same reference number.

Some boundary walls, gates and gate-piers are listed as part of the house entry and have been included under the heading “Walls etc.”

Definitions of Historic Scotland’s Categories

Category A

Buildings of national or international importance, either architectural or historic, or fine little-altered examples of some particular period, style or building type.

Category B

Buildings of regional or more than local importance or major examples of some period, style or building type which may have been altered.

Category C(S)

Buildings of local importance, lesser examples of any period, style or building type, as originally constructed or altered, and simple, traditional buildings, which group well with categories A and B or are part of a planned group such as an estate or industrial complex.

C Areas	Ref No	Street	Number	House Name	Walls etc	Date	Architect	Category	Style
Yes	34695	Abercromby E	9	Auchentail	Yes	19thc I		B	Classical
Yes	34720	Abercromby E	15		No	19thc I	Stewart & Paterson extnsion 1916	B	Classical
Yes	34699	Abercromby E	19		No	1907	Mitchell & Whitelaw	B	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34698	Abercromby E	17		No	1907	Mitchell & Whitelaw	B	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34697	Abercromby E	13		Yes	1900 c		B	
Yes	34700	Abercromby W	18	Summer House only	No	19thc I		C(S)	
Yes	34702	Albert	4	Moorgate	Yes	1903	A N Paterson	B	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34812	Campbell	43,45		Yes	1856		B	Classical porch

Appendix A continued

C Areas	Ref No	Street	Number	House Name	Walls etc	Date	Architect	Category	Style
Yes	34696	Charlotte	47	Green Park	No	1935	John Boyd	B	Art Deco
Yes	34719	Charlotte	44		No	19thc I		C(S)	
Yes	34718	Charlotte	45		No	1909	William Leiper & W Hunter McNab 1913	B	A & C / Eng Shavian
Yes	34717	Charlotte	43		No	1906	William Leiper	B	A & C / Eng Shavian
Yes	34716	Charlotte	41		No	1906	William Leiper	B	A & C / Eng Shavian
Yes	34715	Charlotte	33	The Crossways	Yes	1914	Stewart & Paterson	B	Arts & Crafts + Renaissance doorcase
Yes	34720	Charlotte	46	Arden	No	19thc I	Stewart & Paterson extnsion 1916	B	Classical
Yes	34757	Colquhoun	62	Kildare Lodge	Yes	1860c		C(S)	
Yes	34755	Colquhoun	41	Galloway Cottage	No	1865?	Alexander Thomson? + William Spence 1877	B	Greek revival
Yes	34760	Colquhoun U	6	Lynton	Yes	1908	William Leiper	B	
Yes	34761	Colquhoun U	8	The Hill House	Yes	1902	Charles Rennie Mackintosh	A	Modern idiom Scots Baronial
Yes	34759	Colquhoun U	4	Braeriach	Yes	1909	Robert Wemyss	B	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34758	Colquhoun U	2	Whincroft	Yes	1915	A N Paterson	B	
Yes	34762	Colquhoun U	15	The White House	Yes	1899	M H Baillie Scott	A	Arts & Crafts / Voyseyesque
Yes	34763	Colquhoun U	17	Drumadoon	Yes	1901-3	William Leiper	A	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34770	Dhuhill Drive W		Brincliffe	Yes	1907	Frank Burnet, Boston & Carruthers	B	Free Style
Yes	34769	Dhuhill Drive W		Dhuhill House	No	1847		B	Franco-Italianate
Yes	34771	Dhuhill Drive W		Greycourt	No	1911	A N Paterson	A	Arts & Crafts + renaissance 17th c
Yes	34772	Dhuhill Drive W		Letham Hill	No	1914	John Burnet & Son	B	Arts & Crafts S
Yes	34774	Douglas Drive		Red Tower	Yes	1898	William Leiper	A	Franco/Sc Renaissance + Shavian OE
Yes	34773	Douglas Drive		Tordarroch	Yes	1883	William Leiper	B	Shavian Old English
Yes	34776	Easterhill	4	Dunluce	No	1907	Mitchell & Whitelaw	B	Arts & Crafts S
Yes	34775	Easterhill	3		No	1907	Mitchell & Whitelaw	B	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34780	Glasgow	23		No	19thc m		C(S)	
Yes	34781	Glasgow	25		No	1898	Robert Wemyss	B	Free Style
Yes	34782	Glasgow	29		No	19thc I		C(S)	
Yes	34784	Glenfinlas U		Clunie Hill	Yes	19thc I		B	
Yes	34785	Havelock	19		No	19thc I		C(S)	
Yes	34816	Havelock	26		No	19thc I	William Leiper addition 1893	C(S)	Classical

Appendix A continued

C Areas	Ref No	Street	Number	House Name	Walls etc	Date	Architect	Category	Style
Yes	34786	Henry Bell	23	Redcote	No	1881	T L Watson	B	Shavian Old English / Arts & Crafts
Yes	34787	James	77	Methfield	No	19thc I		C(S)	
Yes	34788	James	89	Lomond School	No	19thc m	William Leiper remodelled 1888 & 1891	B	Jacobean
Yes	34798	John	76	Glen Kin	Yes	19thc m	William Leiper additions 1889	B	
Yes	34799	John	80		Yes	19thc m		B	
Yes	34797	John	70		No	1840c		B	DEMOLISHED
Yes	34800	Kennedy Drive		Cuilvona	No	1909	Duncan McNaughton (+ 1930)	B	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34810	King W	108	Carrisbrooke	Yes	1860	William Fraser additions 1901	B	
Yes	34812	Millig	14		Yes	1856		B	Classical porch
Yes	34814	Millig	20		Yes	1872	William Leiper conservatory 1901 +AN Paterson 1910	B	Classical
Yes	34813	Millig	18	Wester Millig	Yes	1870	William Leiper (adtns AN Paterson & Douglas 1903)	B	French
Yes	34880	Millig	39	The Ingle	Yes	1858	(Campbell Douglas & Paterson 1909 & Paterson 1910)	C(S)	
Yes	34815	Millig	22		No	1895	A N Paterson	B	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34816	Montrose	19, 19A 19B		No	19thc I	William Leiper addition 1893	C(S)	Classical
Yes	34819	Montrose E	31		No	1860c	William Leiper addition 1880c	B	Classical
Yes	34820	Montrose W	1	Dalfruin	Yes	19thc I		B	
Yes	34898	Montrose West L	7a	Elstane	Yes	19thc m	+ Duncan McNaughtan 1878 & 1901	C(S)	
Yes	34898	Montrose West L	7a		Yes	19thc m	+ Duncan McNaughtan 1878 & 1901	C(S)	
Yes	34821	Munro Drive E	6	Easterhill	No	1910c	Mitchell & Whitelaw	B	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34822	Munro Drive W	4	Brantwoode	Yes	1895	William Leiper	A	Arts & Crafts/Shavian Old English
Yes	34823	Munro Drive W	6	Strathmoyne	Yes	1899	Robert Wemyss	B	Arts & Crafts/Shavian Old English
Yes	34844	Queen	32	Deanston	Yes	19thc I		C(S)	
Yes	34839	Queen	25		Yes	1898	William Leiper	C(S)	Former stables
Yes	34840	Queen	6	Haywood	No	1874		C(S)	
Yes	34841	Queen	10	Westward	No	19thc I		C(S)	
Yes	34842	Queen	20	Ardvuela	Yes	19thc I		B	
Yes	34814	Queen	33	Woodend	Yes	1872	William Leiper conservatory 1901 +AN Paterson 1910	B	Classical

Appendix A continued

C Areas	Ref No	Street	Number	House Name	Walls etc	Date	Architect	Category	Style
Yes	34843	Queen	24		Yes	19thc e		C(S)	Classical
Yes	34788	Queen	13		No	19thc m	William Leiper remodelled 1888 & 1891	B	Jacobean
Yes	34851	Rossdhu W		Longcroft	No	1901-2	A N Paterson	A	Scottish Renaissance 17th c
Yes	34862	Sinclair	113	Moorlands	Yes	1873		B	
Yes	34874	Sinclair	116	Station Master's Hse	No	1894		C(S)	
Yes	34878	Sinclair	146	Drum-Millig	No	1909	A N Paterson	B	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34877	Sinclair	134	Albion Lodge	No	1883	William Leiper	B	Arts & Crafts/Shavian Old English
Yes	34860	Sinclair	107	Thornton Lodge	No	1857	Boucher & Cosland	B	Italianate
Yes	34875	Sinclair	118	Rokneys	Yes	1899	Robert Wemyss	B	
Yes	34873	Sinclair	106		No	1850c	William Spence	C(S)	
Yes	34869	Sinclair		Victoria Halls	No	1887	J & R S Ingram (AN Paterson minor+ 1899)	B	Scots Baronial town hall
Yes	34866	Sinclair		Old Millig Toll Hse	No	19thc e		B	
Yes	34858	Sinclair	101	Millfield	Yes	19thc e-m		B	
Yes	34864	Sinclair		Dhuhill Lodge	Yes	1898	William Leiper	B	Scots Baronial
Yes	34863	Sinclair	127	Dhuhill	Yes	19thc m	James Smith?	B	
Yes	34861	Sinclair	109, 111	Cawdor Lodge & Tower Hse	No	1860	(R Wemyss minor additions)	B	
Yes	34859	Sinclair	103	Rowanmore	Yes	1860c		C(S)	
Yes	34865	Sinclair	135	Ardluss	Yes	1900	William Leiper	B	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34876	Sinclair	132	Ballytrim	Yes	1926	Stewart & Paterson?	C(S)	Arts & Crafts
Yes	34872	Sinclair Hermitage Pk		War memoiral	Yes	1923	A N Paterson	A	
Yes	34854	St Michael	5		No	19thc l		C(S)	
Yes	34884	Suffolk	34 & 36	Kintillo House	No	1860c	(William Leiper 1888&1889)	B	
Yes	34883	Suffolk	26		No	19thc m		B	
Yes	34822	Suffolk	22a		No	19thc m		C(S)	
Yes	34881	Suffolk	25	Auchenteil	Yes	1864		B	

Appendix A continued

C Areas	Ref No	Street	Number	House Name	Walls etc	Date	Architect	Category	Style
Yes	34879	Suffolk	19		No	1859		C(S)	Tudor Revival
Yes	34880	Suffolk	23	The Grange	Yes	1858	(Campbell Douglas & Paterson 1909 & Paterson 1910)	C(S)	
Yes	34885	Sutherland Cresc L	6		No	19thc I		C(S)	
Yes	34886	Sutherland Cresc L	7		No	19thc I		C(S)	
Yes	34887	Sutherland Cresc U	1	Rhu-Arden	Yes	1871 c	William Leiper	B	Greek Revival
Yes	34890	Sutherland Cresc U	2	Terpersie (ThurLOW)	No	1871	William Leiper's own house	B	Arts & Crafts "English Cottage"
Yes	34879	Sutherland Cresc L	1		No	1859		C(S)	Tudor Revival
Yes	34891	Victoria		The Lindens	No	19thc I		B	

Appendix B

Tree Preservation Orders in the Conservation Areas

Reference Nos.	Reference Nos.	Date	Location
Argyll and Bute	Dumbarton		
5/04		01.04.04	Burnside House, 38-40 Campbell Street
100	TPO 16	16.10.72	Chapel Acre
	TPO 40		King's Crescent
	TPO 35	15.08.97	Lansdowne Park
	TPO 9		Woodend

Appendix C

The Planning Context:

The National Level

Relevant legislation and guidance forming part of the national planning framework in Scotland is listed in table 1. This is not an exhaustive listing but contains the documents that the Group used in reaching an understanding of the work that they were undertaking.

Table 1

Legislation and Guidance pertinent to Conservation Areas

Legislation

Town and Country Planning (General Development) (Scotland) Order 1992
Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act Ch 8 1997
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act Ch 9 1997
Planning etc.(Scotland) Act 2006 asp 17

Guidance

SPP 1 The Planning System
SPP 21 Greenbelts
NPPG 18 Planning in the Historic Environment: Designing Places. Nov 2001
PAN 52 Planning in Small Towns
PAN 67 Housing Quality. Feb 2003
PAN 68 Design Statements. August 2003
PAN 71 Conservation Area Management. December 2004.

A Guide to Conservation Areas in Scotland: Guide to the designation, safeguarding and enforcement of Conservation Areas 2005
Circular 17/1987 New Procedures and Revised Guidance relating to Listed Buildings in Conservation Areas
Circular 9/1992 Planning and Compensation Act 1991 Enforcement of Tree Preservation Orders
Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas 1998
Conservation Plans: A guide to the Preparation of Conservation Plans 2000
Guide to the Protection of Scotland's Listed Buildings– what it means to Owners and occupiers. 2006

Appendix C continued
C2 Former Planning Policies (West Dunbartonshire)

The Plan prepared for West Dunbartonshire in 1999 when Helensburgh came under the jurisdiction of that Authority is theoretically the extant planning guidance. However, it is some time since it was written and the Conservation Areas are now the responsibility of Argyll and Bute Council. The relevant policies in the Dumbarton plan are listed in Table 2. These are the policies that have been operational until fairly recently. Therefore it is the success or failure of the implementation of these policies that is largely reflected in the current state of the Conservation Areas.

Table 2

Relevant Policies in the West Dunbartonshire Council Plan

Policy No DC 1	Development proposals to have a high standard of building and landscape design (criteria given)
Policy No BE 2	Preparation of Character Appraisals for Conservation Areas (CAs)
Policy No BE 3	High standards for renovations, alterations and extensions in CAs
Policy No BE 4	Presumption for retention of buildings in CAs.
Policy No BE 5	Outline planning applications in CAs
Policy No BE 6	Reassessment and update of Article 4 Direction Orders
Policy No BE 7	Upper Helensburgh CA: criteria for new build
Policy No BE 8	Identifying new uses for vacant listed buildings
Policy No BE 9	Maintenance of listed buildings in Council & private ownership
Policy No BE 10	Design and choice of materials for listed buildings
Policy No BE 11	Criteria for listing further buildings
Policy No BE 12	Responsibilities that come with listed buildings
Policy No BE 14	Demolition of derelict properties
Policy No H 5	Maintaining and enhancing the character of residential areas

The full text of these policies is contained in the Plan, copies of which can be consulted in Helensburgh Public Library. Other policies may also apply.

Appendix C continued
C3 Current Local Planning Policies

The local plan for Argyll and Bute was the subject of a Public Inquiry in 2007. The policies in the plan which are relevant to Conservation Areas are listed in table 3. Some of these have been the subject of amendments or objections. Nonetheless, planning applications are increasingly being determined with these policies in mind. Policy LP ENV 14 is key and, in its latest form, states:

“There is a presumption against development that does not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of an existing or proposed Conservation Area or its setting, or a Special Built Environment Area.

New development within these areas and on sites forming part of their settings must be of the highest quality, respect and enhance the architectural and other special qualities that give rise to their actual or proposed designation and conform to Historic Scotland’s Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas together with Appendix A of this Plan.

Outline planning applications will not normally be considered appropriate for proposed development in Conservation Areas.

The contribution which trees make towards the character or appearance of a Conservation Area will be taken into account when considering development proposals”.

Table 3

**Relevant policies in the Argyll and Bute Council
Draft Finalised Local Plan**

LP ENV 1	Development impact in the general environment
LP ENV 11	Development impact on historic gardens and designed landscapes
LP ENV 13a	Development impact on listed buildings
LP ENV 13b	Demolition of Listed Buildings
LP ENV 14	Development in Conservation Areas & Special Built Environment Areas
LP ENV 15	Demolition in Conservation Areas
LP ENV 18	Protection and enhancement of buildings
LP ENV 19	Development setting, layout and design
LP BUS 1	Business and Industry proposals in existing settlements
LP ADV 1	Advertisements
LP TOUR 1	Tourist facilities and accommodation
LP HOU 4	Housing green-space
LP PG 1	Planning gain
LP ENF 1	Enforcement action
LP DEP 1	Departures to the Development Plan

The full text of these policies is contained in the Plan, copies of which can be consulted in Helensburgh Public Library. Other policies may apply. The text is also available on the Argyll and Bute Council website: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk.

Appendix D

Analysis of the Questionnaire Responses

Introduction

The questionnaire was produced as a means of obtaining views on selected topics whilst providing opportunities for free comment. In total, 150 were issued and 48 were returned. Additionally, there were several sets of very detailed comments not submitted via the questionnaire which have been taken into account in this finalised document.

Q1. It would be helpful to know a little about your interest in this topic. Please tick all or any of the following that apply:

Resident within the Conservation Areas (CAs)

Resident in Helensburgh

Have professional interest in planning, architecture or related professions

Member of an organisation concerned with the future of Helensburgh

Involved with Community Council or Local Authority

Answers to Q1.

Background	Residency			Total
	In Helensburgh		(Not in Helensburgh	
	In CA	Not In CA		
Professional	7	2	2	11
Organisation	6	8	1	15
Community Council or Local Authority	3	5	4	12
Total	16	15	7	38

Commentary: The headings under background in the table above are short-forms for the fuller statements in the question posed. There is almost equal representation of residents in the CAs and other Helensburgh residents. The majority of respondents not living in Helensburgh had a professional or local government interest.

Q2. To what extent does the draft Appraisal meet the following purposes? Please tick a box in each row

The text for the rows on the form is the same as that in the first column of the table below.

Answers to Q2.

Aspect of document	Response						
	Very Well	Well	Partially	Not at all	Not sure	Total	No response
Analyses what makes the place special?	23	22	1	0	0	46	0
Identifies opportunities for enhancement	4	21	17	1	1	44	2
Sets out changing needs	5	17	16	1	3	42	4
Defines boundaries	20	17	6	0	0	43	3
Reviews boundaries	9	22	9	1	1	42	4
Ensures consistent decision-making	3	15	13	6	6	43	3
Assists in policy formulation	12	15	11	1	2	41	5
Provides a basis for a programme of action	10	13	17	3	1	44	2
Enables active management	5	18	12	3	4	42	4
Provides supplementary planning guidance	8	16	13	5	2	44	2
Total	99	176	115	21	20	441	29

Commentary: The elements given were those identified in various guidance documents relating to the preparation of Appraisals for Conservation Areas. The response was overwhelmingly favourable. The weakest performance was against the statement “ensures consistent decision making”. The Group agrees with this. Perhaps it would have been better to have said “assists in” rather than “ensures”. However, in the draft document there was little direct guidance available to those taking decisions on planning matters in the CAs. The strongest marking was in relation to the analysis of what makes the place special. This was very rewarding as this is the element that we felt we should major on and was also the one that caused us the most heart-searching.

Q3. Please list the issues/changes which are eroding the character of the Conservation Areas and which you would like to see

Answers to Q3

Issues/ Changes	No of Mentions	Total per category
BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE		36
Issues/Changes	5	
Pavements/paths	13	
Lighting	5	
Drainage	3	
Street furniture	2	
Parking	1	
Traffic management	3	
Road signs	4	
STREETSCAPE		31
Verges	12	
Trees	14	
Lamp standards	1	
Street name signs	4	
ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER		23
Quality of building design	7	
Appropriateness of design	3	
Appropriateness of materials	2	
Character of boundaries	4	
Entrances	1	
Plot density	3	

Issues/Changes	No of Mentions	Total per category
ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER contd		
Use of non-permeable surfaces	1	
Outbuildings	1	
Tree in gardens	1	
TRENDS		20
Infill	12	
Vandalism	2	
Litter	1	
Demolition of sandstone buildings	1	
Loss of greenspace	4	
OTHER		3
Householders being unaware of CAs	2	
Hermitage Park	1	
ISSUES OUTWITH CAs		4
The Pier	1	
Speed restrictions in roads	1	
Empty shops	1	
Dog Fouling	1	

Commentary on Q3. : The Group had decided to leave this as a very open question and not to constrain the topics in any way. Despite the calibre of the respondents, there was a tendency to highlight more widespread issues and not to confine responses to a) the Conservation Areas or b) the issues that were eroding the character of the Areas. There was overlap/ transferability of some of the responses dealing with infrastructure and streetscape in that it was not always clear to what extent the issues were seen to be practical or aesthetic. With hindsight we would probably have obtained a clearer response by providing some examples or categories.

The topics that were most frequently mentioned were street trees, pavements/ paths, road verges and building infill (either by plot subdivision or by use of green space). Combining some of the categories used, there was equal concern over the quality and appropriateness of building design and the choice of materials.

Q4. Do you consider the current boundaries are appropriate for a) Upper Helensburgh b) The Hill House?

Answers to Q4

CA	Response				
	Yes	No	Not Sure	No re-sponse	Total
Upper Helensburgh	17	20	7	4	48
The Hill House	22	13	7	6	48
Total	39	33	14	10	96

Commentary: Although the draft Appraisal did identify some boundary issues in both CAs, the responses can hardly be taken as indicating a strong conviction for or against in either case.

Q5. Would you support the undertaking of an evaluation of the town centre as a further Conservation Area?

Answers to Q5

Yes	No	Not Sure	No response	Total
32	9	3	4	48

Commentary: The question posed related to undertaking an evaluation – not to seeking designation. Those answering in the affirmative often attached caveats about the creation of another CA and several of those saying no, did so on the basis that they were opposed to a designation on the grounds of it stifling development and therefore saw no point in exploring the situation. There is clearly support for an evaluation.

Q6. What would improve this draft document?

Answers to Q6.

The main suggestions for improvement were:

- Provide a summary
- Make it more succinct
- Avoid repetition
- Make the main message clearer
- Expand the current issues section
- Reduce the historical and discussion sections
- Produce an audit of the pre WW2 buildings and settings
- Make clear that good contemporary design is appropriate in the CAs
- Discuss the interface between the CAs and the rest of the town.

Commentary: In retrospect, there might have been merit in providing more of a structure against which people could comment. However, as we had hoped, this question produced a welter of relevant, useful, detailed comment on all aspects of the document. Those above were among the recurring points that dealt with the document as a whole. There was also much congratulatory comment.

Appendix E

Garden Trees and their contribution to the streetscape

Trees in gardens as seen from the road

The trees in gardens make a major contribution to the streetscape and sense of place.

This Appendix is a sampling of two roads :

- James Street which runs North-South
- Queen Street which runs East-West

Of especial note are the following:

- the similarity of distribution of large specimens on both sides of James Street
- the unequal distribution of planting on Queen Street
- the abundance of trees (and shrubs but not surveyed) on the north side of Queen Street in the front gardens – *excepting where new bungalows have been built*
- the scarcity of planting on the south side of Queen Street where houses and outbuildings back close on the street.



David Sinclair 2007

Below is a diagram of James Street from Queen Street to West Argyle Street with the streets shown in grey

West side

East side



Below is a diagram of Queen Street from Sinclair Street to Suffolk Street showing the streets in grey

North Side

South Side

Sinclair Street

Lime, Sycamore
 Flowering Cherry, Hornbeam
 Lime, Weeping Ash
 Golden Cypress, Maple, Holly, Birch, Cherry

Colquhoun Street

Yew, Maple Holly, Cedar
 Cypress, Cedar
 Dogwood, Maple, Golden Cypress
 Sycamore, Beech

Rowan

James Street

Lime, Douglas Fir, Birch
 Flowering Cherry, Larch

Pine, Lime, Flowering Cherry

John Street

Tulip Tree, Cypress
 Larch, Sycamore, Maple
 Cherry, Hawthorn, Oak
 Oak, Flowering Cherry
 Weeping Ash
 Copper Beech, Horse Chestnut
 Lime, Sycamore, Flowering Cherry
 Willow, Spruce, Maple, Yew
 Beech, Holly, Willow, Birch
 Sycamore, Lime, Beech
 Redwood, Oak
 Laburnum, Sycamore, Maple
 Yew

Birch, Cherry
 Sycamore

Sycamore

Flowering Cherry, Willow
 Spruce

Maple, Yew

Suffolk Street

Appendix F

Possible Boundary Changes to be considered at the Review stage

The Hill House Conservation Area (possible World Heritage Site Buffer Zone):

1. relocation of the northern boundary some 250 metres north of the north side of the woodland plantation
2. moving the southern boundary to the centre of the carriageway of West Rossdhu Drive thus incorporating the railway halt and the wide verge, trees and boundary wall along the north side of West Rossdhu Drive
3. in conjunction with “A” below, bring in the Millig Burn and its associated wilderness.

Upper Helensburgh Conservation Area:

The adjustments which are suggested for review primarily involve the removal of areas of post war housing and the incorporation of contiguous sites of listed buildings.

- A. removal of the post war housing comprising Sinclair Drive and various cul-de-sacs extending eastwards
- B. inclusion of the Golf Clubhouse since it is of a similar vintage to the neighbouring properties within the Conservation Area
- C. inclusion of Victoria Infirmary and Helensburgh Cemetery
- D. review the boundary in the vicinity of King’s Crescent
- E. consider inclusion of the properties along the south side of East Montrose Street
- F. removal of a small number of modern houses to the west of Woodend Street and to the north of West King Street
- G. removal of the southwards bastion extending along the south side of West King Street as far as Suffolk Street
- H. removal of the whole of the area to the north of the south side of Kennedy Drive
- I. Inclusion of A.N. Paterson, Canary Houses on the west side of Rowallan Street and the north side of Millig Street
- J. South side of Argyle Street.

A new Conservation Area?

An evaluation of the town centre could be done, with a view to designating it as a Conservation Area.

Appendix G

Ideas Generated by Consultation for Future Action

During the process of preparing the Appraisal, especially during the consultation phase, many ideas were generated concerning what might be done to preserve or enhance the quality of the Conservation Areas. These thoughts are more closely linked to a future Management Plan for the Areas and hence, do not form part of the Appraisal. Nonetheless, in order to preserve them for future consideration, they have been collected together and assembled into groups according to what aim the ideas were presumed to be seeking to achieve. **Some are more controversial than others and some will undoubtedly provoke fierce debate. All are presented so that they can be evaluated and accepted or rejected.**

1. To ensure the preservation and enhancement of the Special Character

- 1.1 Apply planning policy guidance consistently
- 1.2 Judge planning applications on the basis of the full range of impacts
- 1.3 Explore means of ensuring that trees in the Conservation Areas are safeguarded
- 1.4 Set out policies and criteria to assist decision making on planning control matters
- 1.5 Ensure that public utilities and Council Departments require clearance for actions
- 1.6 Support the bid for World Heritage status for The Hill House
- 1.7 Identify emerging issues and make recommendations for their resolution
- 1.8 Consider preparing a bid to the Historic Environment Regeneration Fund for implementation of the plan
- 1.9 Investigate the availability of funds for maintenance

2. To encourage appropriate preservation and enhancement

- 2.1 Develop incentive schemes
- 2.2 Produce a design guide for new build within Conservation Areas
- 2.3 Produce advice on the removal/replacement of garden trees and shrubs
- 2.4 Create arrangements to ensure that all residents are aware of the legal situation and any guidelines
- 2.5 Produce advice on traditional garden plants
- 2.6 Set out clearly the responsibilities of owners and occupiers
- 2.7 Set out criteria for judging the feasibility of retaining features
- 2.8 Provide guidance on restoration opportunities
- 2.9 Examine the scope for undoing conversions
- 2.10 Identify emerging issues and make recommendations for their resolution
- 2.11 Produce a Q&A booklet for residents
- 2.12 Investigate funding sources and grant giving schemes

Appendix G continued

3. To create a database to facilitate future assessment and planning

- 3.1 Establish database framework and accessibility
- 3.2 Monitor standards of maintenance
- 3.3 Establish a means of monitoring the state of the resource
- 3.4 Compile a CD-ROM or DVD with key information
- 3.5 Complete a townscape audit
- 3.6 Complete a plot size analysis
- 3.7 Create a register of example feu conditions
- 3.8 Commission a survey of garden features
- 3.9 Ensure relevant publications are acquired by the local library
- 3.10 Evaluate effectiveness of existing Tree Preservation Orders
- 3.11 Produce a review of Tree Preservation Orders and consents granted

4. To increase awareness of the special character of the area

- 4.1 Arrange for plaques to be erected outside notable houses
- 4.2 Produce a leaflet for the general public
- 4.3 Develop a series of trail leaflets—architects, styles etc.
- 4.4 Produce a DVD about Helensburgh and its Conservation Areas
- 4.5 Ensure information about the Conservation Areas is on Helensburgh web sites



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